II.

DISSERTATION

CONCERNING THE

ANTIQUITY

OF

CHURCHES.

Wherein is ſhewn, That the

CHRISTIANS,

In the Two Firſt

CENTURIES,

Had no ſuch Publick Separate Places for Worſhip, as the Papiſts generally, and ſome Proteſtants alſo Preſume, and Plead for.

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NOBILISSIMO DOMINO,

D^o^ ROBERTO SOUTHWEL,

Equiti aurato.

Summis virtutibus, perinde ac eruditione ornatiſſimo,
Longo rerum uſu, & Prudentia civili celeberrimo.
Magnis merito Officiis & Honoribus decorato.

Sub Carolo II.

Ad Aulam Portugalliæ ſemel atque iterum,
Ad Bruxellenſem quoque, & Brandeburgicam Legato.

Necnon

Sanctiori Concilio a Secretis.

Gulielmo III.

In Regno Hiberniæ ab Epiſtolis.

Itemque

Regalis Societatis Præſidi.

Hanc qualemcunque Diſſertationem,

Quam humillime

D. D. C.

JOSEPHUS HILL.

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DISSERTATION II.

Of the Antiquity of Artificial Churches under the Gospel.

SECTION I.

HAVING Discourſed in a former *Diſſertation, Of the Antiquity of Temples in the times of the Old Teſtament*; I proceed in this, with the Conſideration, *Of the Antiquity of Churches in Goſpel times under the New.* Wherein the common Opinion of *Proteſtants* is maintained, not only againſt *Bellarmine* and *Baronius*, but ſome *Proteſtants* alſo, as *Fuller* in his *Miſcellanea Sac. l. 2. c. 9.* who undertakes to prove that Chriſtians had their Churches or Temples built, even in the days of the Apoſtles: And more eſpecially *Mede*, who hath largely handled this Subject in's Treatiſe *Of Appropriate Places for Chriſtian Worſhip, both in, and ever ſince the Apoſtles time.* Both theſe ſtate and maintain the Queſtion as they do, and light their Candles at their Torches. In this Controverſie our Adverſaries take the Word ἐκκλησία, (which we render, when taken for a Religious Aſſembly, by the word *Church*; from κυριακὸν, whence the Saxon *Cyric*, and the German *Kyrk*, and we by adding a double Aſpiration *Chyrch*, or *Church*) as it was in after Ages (not in the beginning) taken for a Publick Place for Worſhip. Concerning which, here let me premiſe, That although we have no particular command for building of Churches, as of Old for the Tabernacle (which was a moveable Temple) or the Temples, which were ſtanding Tabernacles, (their Names being frequently interchanged;) nor do they recommend our Services to God, as thoſe that were Typical of our Saviour did: Yet are Edifices very convenient for the Worſhippers, and are ſo far neceſſary for the

advancing Gods Service, as appears by the Light of Nature, and the use of Synagogues amongst the *Jews:* That by such Structures we are better defended against the injuries of Wind and Weather; as also, the Voice of the Minister is in them more Audible than in the open Air; and that thereby we have greater conveniency of excluding such, as ought not to Communicate with us: Besides that after the spreading of the Gospel, they were more necessary for the containing a greater number of Christians, than could meet together in private Houses, or Places: which occasioned afterwards, as liberty was granted, or encouragement given by Christian Magistrates, the building of Oratories and Churches. So that tho we grant the Primitive Christians had always Places for Publick Worship; yet we deny they built any Edifices publickly for the exercise of their Religion, or had any such appropriate places, as our Opponents call *Temples* or *Churches*; but worshipp'd God in such numbers, as could conveniently meet together, only in private Houses, or such places as were obscure, for above 200 Years after our Blessed Saviour's Ascension. Altho in the Third Century, they had some Oratories or Conventicles, here and there, even in the *Roman* Empire, as well as in *Persia*, and other Nations, where the Gospel was spread. For *Arnobius*, who flourished about 285, mentions, *l.* 4. the Christian Conventicles. And *Lactantius* his Schollar *(Justit. l.* 5. *c.* 2.) a Temple destroyed in *Bithynia*. Who being Schoolmaster to *Crispus*, the Son of *Constantine*, it's probable, the publick Places, granted the Christians by *Galienus*, were then enlarged, which were before called Conventicles; as he saith, *One in* Phrygia *set a Conventicle on Fire, and burnt all assembled therein*, cap. 11.

SECT. 2.

The Reasons for this our Assertion are, (1.) The great Persecutions the Christians lived under for the most part, all that time. Which is so apparent from all Histories, Sacred and Civil, that I wonder *Fuller* should say, *That Persecutions in the beginning were more rare, and for the most part private.* Both which are notoriously false, as appears from the *Acts*. For no sooner had the Apostles begun to preach the Gospel, *c.* 2. & 3. but they were by the Rulers imprisoned, beaten and

and charged to desist, *c.* 4 & 5. *Stephen* taken and stoned, *c.* 6 & 7. And thereupon the Church of *Jerusalem* by a great Persecution, scattered, *c.* 8. & 11. *v.* 19. After we have *Herods* persecuting the Christians, killing *James*, and imprisoning *Peter*, with intention to put him to Death, *c.* 12. The Rulers persecute *Paul* and *Barnabas* at *Antioch*, *c.* 13. and at *Iconium*; and at *Lystra Paul* is stoned, *c.* 14. He and *Silas* whip'd and imprison'd by the *Roman* Magistrates, *c.* 16. Persecuted at *Thessalonica*, *c.* 17. A Tumult against *Paul*, &c. *c.* 19. He saith, bonds and afflictions wait for him in every City, and that grievous Wolves should enter among them, not sparing the Flock, *c.* 20. And what Persecutions he suffered at *Jerusalem*, not only from the Rabble, but the Chief, both of the *Jews* and *Romans*, may be seen in the following Chapters. Most of his Epistles were written in Bonds. And its generally said, that he suffered at *Rome* under *Nero*, as *Peter*, many say, did also. And St. *John*'s Banishment into the Isle of *Patmos*, is certain (as 'tis said) by the Emperour *Domitian*. And *Hospinian* hath observed, that from the Apostles time, till Bishop *Sylvester* and the Emperour *Constantine*'s, for above 300 Years, not one of all those 30 Bishops of *Rome*, but suffer'd Martyrdom. But *Fuller* adds, that the same publick calamities were usually common to the *Jews* with the Christians; and therefore if they kept their Synagogues, why might not these their Churches. *Mede* also urgeth this of the *Jewish* Synagogues, because the *Jews* Religion was no more the Empires than the Christians. Both which we deny, for the Jews were the Persecutors, and the Christians the Persecuted: they usually stirring up and incensing the *Gentiles* against these, as the *Acts of the Apostles* testifie, and St. *Paul*, 1 *Thes.* 2. 14, 15, 16. Nor had the Christians then any Churches, as the Jews had Synagogues, tho they had in some Cities separate Meetings. Of the Jewish Synagogues we read in Scripture, but neither Scripture nor History mentions any publick Churches for 200 Years. And afterwards, when they had some Oratories, we read of courses taken for demolishing them: but not (much less at the same time) of the Jewish Synagogues. These having been long before, publickly tollerated in many Places to the Jews where they resided. And they having now renounced Christ, the Devil and Heathen Emperours had no cause to disquiet them, but made use of them in opposing

Christianity. As *Julian* we know, employ'd them for building again their Temple at *Jerusalem*, to despite the Christians. And no Religion is more hated of a Natural Man than the True; all others being prefer'd before this.

Mr. *Mede* in answering the Objections against his Opinion, endeavours to enervate this of Persecution two ways. (1.) By asserting, that the greatest Persecutions (as the five last of the Ten) fell out in the Third Century, wherein 'tis granted the Christians had some Oratories, and therefore why not in the two former, seeing their Persecutions were not continual, nor of long duration. But tho we grant, in regard of the abundance of Bloud-shed, the last were the cruellest; yet was there always such as hindred, both the erecting and appropriating Churches, and publickly assembling (the Laws and Emperors being their Enemies) contenting themselves to meet as they could with the most safety in secret. And tho their Persecution was not constant, yet were they constantly liable thereunto, as the Apostle tells us, *Rom.* 8. 36. *For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as Sheep for the Slaughter.* Histories also shew us, their Sufferings were more continual, and less interrupted, in the two first, than third Century. Wherein after a sore Storm under *Valerian*, they enjoy'd a comfortable calm, under his Son *Galienus*, who restored to them their Cemeteries, and all other places of Worship; which was such a favour or Tolleration, as we read not of in the two first Ages. (2.) Mr. *Mede* argues from the credibility of the Christians having Oratories in the *Roman* Empire, as well as in the *Persian*. Which we deny, for 'tis the *Roman* Empire only, that is represented under the Shape of a Red Dragon with 7 Heads and 10 Horns, making War with the Saints of God. Nor are we now dealing with a matter of Opinion, or Credibility, but matter of Fact and History; which ascertains the Persecution under the *Roman* Emperors for 300 years, but mentions little or none at all, under the *Persian* Monarchs, during that time, tho afterwards, as *Sozomen l.* 2. *c.* 8. relates by *Saporez*, which was long before *Isdigerdis*, who was Contemporary with *Theodosius*.

Nor doth the Churches of *Persia* prejudice our Opinion; seeing they were but (by Mr *Mede*'s acknowledgment) in *Constantine*'s time. Before which, there were some Churches in the *Roman* Empire. For *Diocletian* his Predecessor made an Edict for the demolishing them. Having

Having thus vindicated our Argument from ſeveral Attacks: We may further enforce it, both by the experience of former Ages, and alſo our own. The *Iſraelites* in *Egypt*, tho they dwelt together, a long time at leaſt, yet we read not of any Temples they built there. And when they were in Captivity in *Babylon*, tho we read of their building Houſes, *Jer.* 29. yet nothing of Synagogues. Paſs on from the Heatheniſh to the *Popiſh* Perſecutions, former and latter: Where at this day, in *Italy*, *France*, *Spain* and *Portugal*, are any Churches built, or Publick Meeting-Places for *Proteſtants*? Nay even the *Lutherans* will not allow the publick exerciſe of the Reformed Religion. The Story of the *German* Church under *Johannes a Laſco*, who fled from *London*, to avoid the Perſecution under Queen *Mary*, to the *Lutherans*, and how barbarouſly treated, is well known, and lamentable to conſider. And the ſame ſpirit continues, ſo that the *Dutch* Church at *Hamburg* go to *Altena*, and the *Engliſh* are confin'd to their own Houſe. *Sweden* is expelling them, and ſeveral Princes perſecuting them. Nor need we go ſo far, the experience of theſe Three Kingdoms is ſufficient. Where altho the Perſecution of the Nonconformiſts, was not from the Heathens, (as the Primitive Chriſtians:) Nor from *Papiſts* (as the *Waldenſes* of old, and all Diſſenters from them generally ever ſince:) Or any *Proteſtants* of a different Denomination; nor to death; but only Fines or Impriſonments. *&c.* Yet who went about to build any publick Places for Worſhip, or had ſuch, till a Tolleration was granted them? Who can imagine any ſo mad, as to build or buy publick Places, where their Enemies are Rulers; and having all Civil Power in their hands, would not only ſhut them up, or demoliſh them, but alſo ſeverely puniſh ſuch preſumption.

SECT. 3.

Our 2d Argument is from the defect of ſufficient Teſtimonies from Scripture, of the Chriſtians having any publick appropriate places in the Apoſtles time; or from authentick Authors, of any ſuch the two firſt Centuries. Nor let any think it ſufficient to ſay, that *Argumentum ab autoritate non valet negativè*; *an Argument from authority negatively, is of no force.* For in Religion, Scripture ſo argues, not only in matter

ter of our duty, because never commanded; but also in matter of History, as *Hebr.* 7. 14. *Our Lord sprang out of Juda, of which Tribe Moses spake nothing concerning Priesthood.* Whence by the way, we may gather, that our Saviour never went further into the Temple, not being a Priest of the Tribe of *Levi*, than the Outward Court. And in matters of Fact so many Hundred Years ago, this way of arguing is generally used and received. As *Baronius* useth it in a like case, *A. D.* 48. and others also frequently. For how should we know, what was done so long since, but by History. Now in all the diligent searchers into Antiquity, as *Eusebius*, *Hierom*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and other Ancient Fathers and Authors, we find no footsteps of any publick Churches, the two first Centuries; but many against them.

For the Scriptures, whosoever reads the *Apostles Acts*, which contain their History about 32 Years; will find the Church assemblies still in private Houses, as *c.* 12. *v.* 12. so *c.* 20. *v.* 8. and to the very last, *c.* 28. *v.* 29, 30. so also in their Epistles. And tho all places were indifferent to them in respect of holiness, yet not of conveniency; so that according thereto, no doubt they were appointed; and in the heat of Persecution, such as were most secret and secure.

And will never find the *Church* therein taken for a Place. It being the general Opinion of *Protestants*, which the Learned *Lutheran*, *Gerrard de Eccles. c.* 2. relates. *In S. literis significatio Ecclesiæ pro loco non occurrit; sed progressu temporis factum, ut à Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis tandem reciperetur. Sed quilibet videt hanc appellationem esse impropriam, & κατάχρησιν. In the Holy Scriptures, the Church is no where taken for a Place; tho in process of time, it came to be so used in Ecclesiastical Writers. But every one sees, the taking of it in this sense, is improper and catachrestical.* *Camero* likewise, a Learned *Calvinist*, in's *Tract. de Ecclesia*, and generally all of both Professions. So that we may conclude as to the Scriptures, that however the grand Tyrant *Custom* prevailed in after Ages, to call the Place by the name of *Church*, yet from the beginning it was not so.

And for human Testimonies; for the first Ages succeeding the Apostles, we might here produce very many, to prove the Primitive Christians had no such publick Churches or Temples. But in regard we sustain the negative part, and our Opponents the affirmative, to whom the Proof most properly

perly belongs, according to the Maxim, *affirmanti incumbit probatio*: And those that favour our Adversaries Opinion, will be apt to say, we do but beg the Question; for that they have both Scripture, and good Humane Testimonies for them. We shall therefore first examine what they alledge; and afterwards produce such Witnesses against them, as we shall willingly submit to the judgment of all impartial Men, on which side the Truth lies. For if they can either by Scripture, or approved Authors, mantain their cause, we shall yield it; notwithstanding the improbability therof, from the Persecutions the Christians were under in the first Ages. But here we must profess, that this being matter of fact, we are not to be put off, nor shall we acquiesce with conjectures or probabilities, such as *Platina*, *Polid. Virgil*, &c. urge, from the Apostles and Primitive Christians zeal to promote Religion, (as if there could be none, without such appropriate and consecrated Places, as they call Churches) But there must be authentick Records, from approved Authors, that there were such in the Apostles days, and the two first Ages after our Saviour; otherwise we can have no certainty of what was done at such a distance from us, so many Ages agone.

SECT. 4.

We shall therefore now enter the Lists with our Adversaries, and not decline any of their Weapons, being well secur'd by the shield of Truth. Tho we take no notice of several flourishes they make, that being needless, in regard of the several Editions of the Authors, wherein they may be seen, and especially of *Mede*, our principal Adversary.

From Scripture, especially 1 *Cor.* 11. 18, 20, 22. which *Bellarmine c.* 4. *de cultu sanctorum*, and *Baronius*, produce for Churches and Oratories distinct from private Houses in the Apostles days. Answered at large by *Vedelius* in his Exercitation upon *Ignatius*'s Epistle to the *Magnesians*.

Mr. *Fuller* likewise, who argues that from that the Apostle having said, *v.* 18. *when you come together in the Church*, forthwith expounds it by *v.* 20. *when you come together in the same place*; shewing by the *Church* he denotes the *Place*. But here he supposeth, that συνέρχεσθαι ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, is to come together in the same place; which is denied. For men cannot come,

come, or meet together, but in some place, either natural or artificial. *Beza* renders it *in unum*, others *simul* or *conjuncti*: I should *ad idem*. For the expression is Hellenistical, and signifies not only a Concourse in the same place, but agreement in condition, and concurrence in the same action, tho in different places, according to the *Septuagint*. Even as in *Acts* 2. 44. and other Texts it must be understood; for both the diversity of Tongues, and multitude of Christians, as *five thousand*, c. 4. *v.* 4. manifest it could not be in the same place. *Camero* in his *Myrothecium*, shews the Phrase is taken from the Septuagints Version of *Psalm.* 2. 2. where *the Princes assemble together*, ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, not in reference to the same place, but to their conjunction in heart and counsel about the same thing. Which sence Dr. *Hammond* follows, on *Acts* 1. 15. If any object, if the Church be not the place, but the People, 'tis as much as to say, *when you meet together in a Meeting*. But this is also denied, for συνέρχεσθαι signifies only the general Notion of *coming together*, or *assembling*, as *Acts* 11. 26. but the *Church*, a special, *viz.* a holy Meeting. So that 'tis not the place, but the imployment, that gives the denomination. For as it is not in every place, where the Senators or Parliament-men meet, that there is a Senate or Parliament. Nor in every place, where the Pastors of the Church meet, is there forthwith a Synod. Seeing both sorts may come together at Fasts or Feasts, or other occasions. But there and then only, where and when they meet to deliberate about affairs, Civil or Ecclesiastical. So wheresoever the Members of a Church come together, they are not for that said to come together in the Church, but only then and there, when and where they come together for the exercise of Religion.

But the chief Argument all our Opponents make use of, is from *v.* 22. where they assert an Antithesis or Opposition, between private Houses proper to each, and the Church which is common to all. Let us therefore duly consider it. And (1.) That tho the word ἐκκλησία be used above 100 times in the New Testament; yet this is the only place our *Protestants* insist on for their Opinion. Altho *Bellarmine* alledgeth also, 1 *Cor.* 14. 25. which yet clearly proves the contrary. (2.) We deny, as *Camero* in his Answer to *Fuller*, (*Tract. de Eccles. c.* 1.) that the opposition here, is made between the doing of any thing in this or that place; but in the presence of others, or not

in

in their presence. As when one doth that in publick, which should be done at home; we rate him saying, *Hast thou not an House of thy own? Dost thou despise the City? understanding not the Structures or Streets, but the faces of the Citizens who are there.* And that this is the Apostles meaning, appears both by the following words, *and shame them that have not:* that is the poor Brethren, that had neither Money to buy, nor Provisions to bring for their Feasts of Charity (then in use at the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.) So that 'tis not despising the Place, but the Persons; putting the poor (who are a great part of the Church) to blush and be ashamed. And also by a parallel Place in this Epistle, *c.* 14. *v.* 34 & 35. where the Apostle forbids their Women to speak in the Churches, *And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their Husbands at home; for it is a shame for Women to speak in the Church.* Where we see a plain opposition, between the Church and their own Home; which yet cannot be understood of the Church as a Place: The Case being clear, that it was not unlawful for Women to speak in such a Place simply, but only at such a time when the Congregation was at Divine Worship: otherwise, it would be unlawful for any Woman, before or after Publick Worship, to speak in the place. Nor was it sinful surely, for Women to speak at their Love-Feasts, tho in the Church. Besides, 'tis said, *your* Women in the *Churches*, which implies, there were more than one Congregation in the Church of *Corinth.*

I shall not stand to alledge Commentaries on 1 *Cor.* 11. 22. as *Cajetan*, who is absolutely for the Congregation, and *Aquinas*, and *Carthusian*, as also Dr. *Pearson* on the Creed, *p.* 337. say, it may as well be so understood as of the place. But further prove the Truth (3.) By the Argument which the Apostle draws from the holiness of the Meeting, and not from the holiness of the Place, to take the *Corinthians* off from their Dissentions, *v.* 18. for in every Meeting, Dissentions are to be avoided; but in a holy Meeting, ordained for Religion, they ought to be detested. And so from Intemperance, *v.* 20, 21. shewing unity in the Truth of Doctrine, and unanimity in affections are necessary for the right receiving the Lords Supper, in the following Verses. And I would further argue with mine Opponents, suppose their meeting had been on some Mountain, or in some Cave, (which was not unusual) and the

faults here mentioned had been committed; should they not have been liable to the same censure of despising the Church of God? But (4.) Should we grant the opposition they make, between the Church and their own Houses, yet will not this serve to overthrow our Opinion, or establish their own; except they can further prove, this Church or Place to have been publick, and not in a private House, like unto others mentioned throughout the *Acts*.

Mr. *Mede* carries this 22d verse, for a reproof of the *Corinthians*, for using profane Banquetings and Feastings in a sacred place, to introduce his Opinion of the holiness of Churches, as *Bellarmine c. 5. de cultu sanct.* saith, *Satis innuitur, tunc etiam Ecclesiam aliquo modo sacratam fuisse*, hence *'tis sufficiently gathered, that even then the Church was some manner of way holy*; which he saith, was *for consecration*. But *Mede* runs against the stream of Interpreters, who expound it of their Love-Feasts. Neither doth the Apostle reprove them for any such thing, but for their schismatical, unbrotherly and intemperate Carriage therein. These Love-Feasts, *a Lapide*, as *Austin*, *Aquinas*, *Cajetan*, and others, think preceeded; and *Justinian* as *Chrysostom* and divers others, that they followed after the Communion. The Opinions of the Ancients concerning their order, are cited by these two Learned Jesuites upon the place, where they may be seen; and the manner of them in *Kerchers Roma Subterranea l. 6. c. 27.* As far as my reading reaches, tho these Love-Feasts sometimes were before as in the Church of *Alexandria*, (as *Sozomen* saith, *l. 7. c. 19.*) and some others: Yet more usually they followed after the Sacrament. However, we have multiplicity of Testimonies in the Writings of the Ancients, for them at the Communion in the Primitive Church: and none I can find amongst them for Mr. *Mede*'s Opinion, except *Sedulius*; nor amongst the Modern, but *Salmeron*; and these quite contrary to the genius of the Text.

But he proceeds to tell us, that as most of the Words signifying an Assembly or Company, are wont to be used also for the place; so here ἐκκλησία. Which we deny not in common Speech; but then the expression is not proper, but figurative, *continens pro contentis*, the Place containing, for the Persons contained. He cites St. *Austin* taking the Church here for the place of Meeting. It's true, he does so, on *Leviticus*, *l. 3. c. 57.* to which *Bede* on the Text refers, but only for the time

time wherein the Congregation met, *Ecclesia dicitur locus, quo Ecclesia congregatur.* And it is apparent, that the faults mentioned by the Apostle, are such only as were committed, at the time of their assembling for the Worship of God. Nor doth *Austin* appropriate it to a Place civil or artificial, as our Opponents do, not considering such abuses have their course in their Meetings in what place soever, natural or civil.

The next Author he produceth is *Basil*, who pleads for the Holiness of Churches; of which hereafter.

Commentators follow. The Author of the Comments on the Epistles (falsly ascribed to *Hierom*) a *Pelagian*, seems to deliver the Opinion of others, rather than his own, saying, *Quidam hunc locum ad illos referunt, qui Epulas in Ecclesia faciebant: facientes eam trielinium Epularum.* And *Sedusius* (whom the former Author seems to point at) is of that Opinion, thinking it unlawful to keep their Feasts in the Church. Wherein he is singular, and contrary to the Apostle, who rectifies the abuse only, by admonishing them to *stay one for another*, and make their poor Brethren partakers with them of their Viands. Furthermore, even those that take the Church for a holy Place, and cite this (as Sir *H. Spelman* and several others) of the *Corinthians* making the Church *trielinium Epularum*, make it only a private Room, for *trielinium* was never taken for a House, much less a publick one. To which may be added, the practice in after Ages, in St. *Austin*'s time, when the Christians kept their Love-Feasts *in memoriis Martyrum*, or in their Churches, as appears by his Answer to *Faustus* the *Manichee*, *l.* 10. *c.* 20, 21. at large.

As for *Chrysostom*, *Theodoret*, *Theophilact* and *Cecumenius*, tho they take the Church for a Place; yet none of them as *Mede*, that the *Corinthians* fault was, in keeping there profane Banquetings: Nor otherwise than in reference to the very time only, of their meeting therein. And whereas *Chrysostom* says, the Church as well as the Poor were wronged; he cannot, I suppose, mean it of the Place, for Time and Place cannot be said to be despised or dishonoured, but by an extrinsecal denomination, when God is dishonoured, or our Brethren, by our unchristian behaviour in the place. As here the latter member, being joyn'd thereto by a copulative, may fairly expound the former (as usually) *viz.* in shaming them that have not, you despise the Church, as *Cajetan* and *Piscator* expound

it. So that tho the Grammatical oppoſition be between two places; yet the Logical and Theological is between a place of many preſent therein, and a private place. From theſe Teſtimonies, *Mede* concludes there were places appointed, and ſet apart for Chriſtian Worſhip, even in the Apoſtles times.

But tho no Man doubts, that believes the Goſpel, that the Chriſtians had places for Worſhip; yet it follows not thence, that they were ſet apart from all other uſes, for Chriſtian Worſhip. Neither doth he, or any other Opponent prove this. Places of meeting, the Ancients ſuppoſe, but ſeparate Places they ſuppoſe not. It was 200 Years and more, e'er they had Publick Oratories. And when the Heathen objected they had no Temples, Altars nor Images, they freely confeſs as much.

Having vindicated this Text in the *Corinths*, we ſhall briefly mention ſome others, alledged for ſeparate and publick Churches: Tho ſome are ſo far-fetch'd, they deſerve not mentioning. As Mr. *Fuller* from 1 *Cor.* 14.40. *That all things be done decently, and in order*, inferring that publick Offices be done in publick Places, as much as may be. And what, I pray, is more publick than the open Air, Mountains and Fields where our Saviour inſtructed his Followers?

Likewiſe from *Acts* 19.9. *Paul ſeparated the Diſciples, diſputing daily in the School of one Tyrannus*: As if this School was one of the Temples of Chriſtians, which he confeſſeth was but borrowed, or hired for the urgent neceſſity.

His next place is *Acts* 15. 21. whence he argues, the *Iſraelites* from the beginning of their Commonwealth had Synagogues; ſo the Chriſtians from the day of Pentecoſt, Churches. But that is very dubious; for tho I judge Synagogues much Ancienter than till after the Captivity (whence many Learned Men date them;) yet that they were ſo Ancient as he makes them, cannot be proved. Nor will *Pſ.* 74. 8. ſerve, admitting various Tranſlations. The 70, *They have put down the Feaſts*; *Hierome*, *Tabernacula*; *Montanus*, *Conventicula*; *Junius*, *Synagogas*, which denotes all kinds of Aſſemblies, Civil and Eccleſiaſtical, in their places; as *Gerhard de Eccleſ. c.* 1. §. 4. ſhews at large. Nor that of *Iſ.* 83. 12. of which Sir *H. Spelman* hath a Diſcourſe, at the end of his Tract *de non temerandis Eccleſiis*. And who ſees not a vaſt difference; the *Iſraelites* were a free State of themſelves, and had Governours.

nours Civil and Eccleſiaſtical, ſupream and ſubordinate, in the Land of *Canaan*, of their own: Whereas the condition of Chriſtians was quite otherwiſe, till *Conſtantine*'s time, as all know. His laſt Scripture is *James* 2. 2. where συναγωγὴ *Synagogue*, is much more pregnant to denote a Place, than ἐκκλησία the *Church*; for of above 100 Texts where this is uſed, no one, except that in 1 *Cor.* 11. 22. is with any colour alledged for a Place; whereas *Synagogue* is frequently ſo taken, both in the 70, and in the New Teſtament, when applied to the *Jews*, as *Acts* 13. 14. & 14. 1. *&c.* tho ſometimes for an Aſſembly, and moſt uſually ſo when applied to Chriſtians. As the *Syriac* here renders it; and *Beza*, *cœtum*: the vulgar *Latine* (which ſome ſay is the *Vetus Italica*, and make great account of it, (as our Biſhop *Andrews*, *&c.*) *conventum*; as our laſt Verſion *Aſſembly*, and the former *company*; declining the Word *Synagogue*, for no other reaſon, that I can conceive, but becauſe they judged, that Chriſtians had no ſeparate Places in thoſe days, as the *Jews* had; *James* we know wrote to the Twelve Tribes diſperſed, with whom the Word συναγωγὴ, was in uſe, as Helleniſtical; ſo that after they became Chriſtians, they might well call their Metting, of what condition ſoever it were, by that name: For the Word ſignifies all kinds of Aſſemblies, Civil and Sacred, as Dr. *Hammond* ſhews on *Matth.* 6. 2. from many Texts; and here in *James*, Conſiſtories for Judicature, by 5 reaſons. And the Apoſtles having uſed the Word ἐκκλησία, or *Church*, to diſtinguiſh the Chriſtians meetings from the *Jewiſh*, and as more proper, *&c.* (which *Gerhard* in the *Chap.* above cited, notes;) the Name of *Synagogue* was ſoon given over among Chriſtians, and ſuch places called προσευκτήρια and κυριακὰ; but whether before they became ſeparate places, or after; and about what time ſuch were built for Prayer, is the queſtion.

SECT. 5.

Mr. *Mede* from Scripture, proceeds to enquire, what manner of Places theſe appropriate were, before he produceth the teſtimonies of Antiquity for ſuch. Where firſt he acknowledges (as *Baronius* had before him) that they were not ſo goodly and ſtately, as after the Empire became Chriſtian, and we now enjoy: But ſome capable and convenient room, within.

in the Walls or Dwelling of some pious Disciple, dedicated by him to the use of the Church, usually an Upper-Room, such as that called *Cœnaculum Sionis*, where the Apostles and Disciples after our Saviour's Ascension, usually assembled, and the Holy Ghost fell upon them, on the day of Pentecost. Concerning which place he brings a long Train of Traditions from *Nicephorus*; a most fabulous Author, in the judgment of all Learned Men; not worthy to be mentioned.

Here let me observe the Difference amongst our Opponents. (1.) As to the Place, *Bellarmine* and *Baronius*, as also our *Fuller*, conclude from that Text in the *Corinths*, for appropriate Houses or Churches; but *Mede* only for one Room, usually an upper, in an House. (2.) *Bellarmine* would have these Houses to be holy Temples, from the Christian Sacrifices therein, meaning the Mass, which he thinks is alone sufficient for the denomination of a Temple. For *c.* 4. *de cultu sanctorum*, he saith, *Templum nihil aliud est, quam locus Altaris. A Temple is no other thing than the place of an Altar:* called also, *basilica*, saith he, as erected at some Saints Sepulcher. *Baronius* and *Fuller* content themselves with the distinction of Oratories, which tho poor and mean amongst Christians, in comparison of the Heathens Temples, yet were those Temples, as well as these. But *Mede* will have his rooms, by reason of the Owners Dedication, to be Oratories and Churches: Tho *Justinian* distinguishes these, (on 1 *Cor.* 11.) saying, *Christians had their meetings first in private Houses, afterwards in Oratories and Churches.*

And whereas Mr. *Mede* discourseth of a room and House, in the singular number (as best suiting his Opinion of appropriate places, even in the Apostles days) meaning without doubt, wheresoever there was a Church, as he instanceth in the *cœnaculum Sionis*, in *Jerusalem*. All this is nothing better than building upon the Sand. For considering the several circumstances in *Acts c.* 1. & 2. its far more probable, that that ὑπερῶον, or *upper Room*, was in the Temple, than any private House As appears from several Authors and Arguments gathered together in *Pool's Synopsis*, on *Acts* 1 13. to which I refer, being unwilling to transcribe such Authors, as are common, and easily come at. Then what room could contain such numbers, as 3000 *Acts* 2. 41. which soon increased (as some think) to 5000, or more probably, (as others gather from

from the Text *Acts* 4. 4.) were so many more. The ingenious *Potter* on 666. *ch.* 16. from the multitude of Believers in *Jerusalem*, computes that each of the Twelve Apostles might have about 500 under his care. Besides, the Gift of so many Tongues, implies their several meetings accordingly: for we must not fancy, as *Salmasius* and some others, that whoever spake in any Language, was understood by all: because this makes the Miracle to be in the Hearers, and not the Speakers; who were inspired for preaching the Gospel abroad in the Nations, whose Languages they were ignorant of before. Consider also that hot Persecution that presently followed the year after, in the 8th of the *Acts*, and whether this did not necessitate them, often to change the places of their assembling, it being neither safe to meet in great multitudes, nor always in the same place. It's probable also, from *v.* 3. by *Saul*'s entring κατὰ τοὺς οἴκους *into their several Houses*, was either when, or where they assembled; for *into every House* (as we render it) of so many Christians, as were in *Jerusalem*, seems to me improbable.

I pass over the fabulous Traditions, and fictitious Glosses on *Acts* 10. 9. and 18. 22. especially, as unworthy the Author, and the least consideration. And can grant him that which follows, of some giving whole Houses, for sacred Assemblies, as the multitude of Believers increased; tho this cannot be proved in the two first Centuries. As also, that at length, they built Structures in the Cœmeteries of Martyrs; which yet *Platina* and *Polid. Virgil* say, were but *Sacella*, *Chappels*, and those in secret and unknown places

SECT. 6.

We shall now proceed to examine their Testimonies: which Mr. *Mede* having most fully gathered, and regularly, of all our Opponents, ranked throughout the 3 first Centuries: We shall therefore follow his order, and paticularly consider them, as he represents them. Altho we think it not necessary to express all his words; his Works by many Editions, being in most Scholars hands. He begins with *Eusebius*'s relating a passage out of *Philo* the *Jew*, concerning the *Essenes*, whose manner of Life and Worship *Philo* describes (*p.* 876. *&c.* and more fully in his following Book *de vita contemplativa*,

tiva, *p.* 893. *&c.* of last Edition 1691.) Which place in *Eusebius l.* 2. *c.* 17. *Hist. Bellarmine* before him had alledged, *c.* 4. *de cultu sanctorum*: tho they both knew *Eusebius*'s being generally censured, for his accommodating it to the Christians. For its plain to any that peruses *Philo*, that he speaks of a Sect of *Jews*, who were *Monks*, and had each their proper place for Worship, called σεμνεῖον καὶ μοναστήριον, and one κοινὸν, or *common*, wherein they assembled for Worship every 7th day. Whereas the Christians neither withdrew into Cells, nor observed the 7th, but the first day of the Week, from Christ's Resurrection, and the day of Pentecost, which fell on the first, and after, as appears by Scripture. And however confident *Mede* is, of *Eusebius* being of his Opinion, the contrary appears in's Book *de prepar. Evangel. l.* 7. *c.* 6. *& l.* 13. *c.* 13. and *Philo*'s Book of the *Cherubims*, shews he was not of *Mede*'s mind.

His next Argument is from the Apostles Salutations of several Persons, and the Church in his or their House. Which he understands not of Families, (as he grants 'tis commonly taken) but the Congregation of Saints. Whence he infers, appropriate Places, and their Dedication by their Owners, to be Oratories for the Church in their several Cities. And he cites *Lucian*'s *Philopatris*, for their Description.

To which we reply, (1.) That this proves no more, than that Christians had meetings in private Houses, which none denies: which yet were often interrupted, not only in *Diocletian*'s time, when they were examined if they kept their meetings in their Houses, as appears in the *Acts of Martyrs*, but in *Tertullian*'s time also. (2.) The Place in their Houses, was but a *cænaculum*, or Dining-Room, as *Mede* grants; which as it was incapable of salutation, so of containing the whole Church in most of those Cities. For who can think their Houses, much less one room, so large, seeing *Aquila* was but a *Tent-maker*, banished from *Rome* by *Claudius*, after whose Death he returned, before St. *Paul*'s Epistle to the Church there, wherein *c.* 16. *v.* 5 he salutes the Church in their House. And not only at *Rome*, but at *Philippi*, or *Ephesus* also, the Church that was in his House, as 1 *Cor.* 16. 19. And what the rest were that had Churches in their Houses, we read not. (3.) The Church in their Houses is considered as distinct from themselves, that were Masters and Owners, and thus

thus it is fairly applied to their Families: But if to the whole Congregation, the Persons whose Houses they were, being Members thereof, as well as any others, it were very improper. For so when St. *Paul* bids the Church of *Rome*, *Salute the Church in* Aquila *and* Priscilla's *House*, *Rom.* 16. 5. his meaning is, that the *Romans* should salute themselves. So in wishing the *Colossians* (4. 15.) to salute the Church in *Nymphas*'s House, he desires them to salute themselves. And so of the rest.

Now to say these Masters of Houses, bestowed some part or place thereof to the Churches use, needs no proof (for none can lawfully enter into another man's House, without his allowance) but that they Dedicated them, doth. For if Dedication was then used (of which hereafter) yet surely not by a private person. And whereas some singular thing must be meant, saith *Mede*, he concludes, this of the whole Church in their House, must be it. Which is inconsequent. And tho it be unreasonable, to demand a reason of anothers actions, which himself conceals; yet something may be gathered for this, from the Apostle. As for *Aquila* and *Priscilla* from *Rom.* 16. 3, 4. and *Acts* 18. 26. And as *they were his helpers in Christ Jesus*, that is in reference to the promoting the Gospel: so were *Nymphas* also, and *Philemon*, whom *Paul* calls his *fellow labourer*. As for *Lucian*, cited also by *Baronius*, for proof of Houses separate: *Vedelius* answers, (1.) That the Dialogue *Philopatris*, is none of *Lucian*'s, *sed alterius alicujus scioli*: and (2.) That the place may as well be understood of a private as a publick House.

His 3d proof is from Tradition, That *Theophilus* to whom St. *Luke* inscribes his Gospel and Acts, converted his House into a Church; derived from the *Traditions of Clemens*. As *Pudens* likewise mentioned, 2 *Tim.* 4. 21. a *Roman* Senator and Martyr from the *Acta Pudentis*.

This of *Theophilus* mentioned by *Bellarmine c.* 4. *de cultu sanct.* from *Clements Recognit. l.* 10. and *Baronius A.D.* 58. *num.* 32. that had not found who he was, but in *Clements Recognitions*: *Vedelius* answers, (in *Epist. Ign. ad Magnes.*) *scriptis quæ citat* Baronius *tantum deferendum est, quantum citanti*: *To the Writings cited by* Baronius *we are to give as much credit, as to the Citer*. See the judgment of *Papists* concerning these *Recognitions*, in *Coci censura Scriptorum*, p. 20. of *Pererius*, *Sixtus Senensis*, *Driedo*,

do, yea *Baronius* himſelf, *A. D.* 51. *num.* 53. who ſaith, *That out of theſe Books, as out of a dirty Sink, are taken ſuch prodigious Lies, and mad Dotages, as are not only to be reproved, but extreamly rejected by the Learned*, &c.

His laſt Teſtimony is from *Clemens*'s *Epiſtola ad Corinthios*, who ſpeaking of Gods Worſhip under the Goſpel, ſaith, *He hath determined where and by whom, &c.* Whence *Mede* concludes, Places, as well as Times and Perſons, were appropriate and diſtinct, in the Apoſtles days. Adding, that this Divine Ordinance is found in the Analogy of the Old Teſtament.

To which I anſwer (1.) That 'tis granted this Epiſtle is authentick. *Grotius* hath in a large Epiſtle approved it. *Salmaſius de Epiſc. & Presbyt.* and *Blondel* and *Hammond* in their Diſciplinarian Controverſies, own it for genuine. *Junius* and Dr. *Fell*, in their Notes vindicate it; tho I know, a late Author, *Erneſtus Teutzelius* a *German* hath largely anſwered them, and pronounces the Epiſtle ſpurious; eſpecially for the mention of the Phœnix therein. Whom I have had thoughts to refute, and animadvert on ſome others that have nibled at it, when I get time to publiſh various Obſervations I have upon it. For Dr. *Wake* in's Introduction to his Tranſlation, *c.* 2. hath only touched thereon. But (2.) What needs Mr. *Mede* to make ſuch a ſtir about *Clemens*'s πῦ, when the Scripture hath determined, that God under the Goſpel is to be worſhipped every where, as *Malachy* 1. 11. *From the riſing of the Sun to the going down of the ſame.* And our Saviour himſelf ſignifies as much, *John* 4. 20, 21, 22, 23. where he declares who are the true Worſhippers of God under the Goſpel, without any reference to place, in oppoſition to the worſhipping him, in this or that place; whether on the Mount where the Patriarchs worſhipped him of old, or at *Jeruſalem* where the *Jews* worſhipped him afterwards. As *Gorran* obſerves, *localitatem excludit: He excludes appropriation to any place, as neceſſary to Gods worſhip*; and adds, *non determinat locum orationis alicubi, ſed ubique*; *determines not the place of prayer to any particular place, but enlarges it to every place.* To every private Houſe, *Acts* 9. 11, to the top of an Houſe, 10. 9. to the Sea ſhore, 21. 5. ſo the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 1, 2. *In every place call on the Name of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*; and 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. *I will, that men pray every where.* And undoubtedly *Clement* could not be ignorant

of

of this, considering the persecuting times wherein he lived, when the Churches of God were driven from place to place, and constrained to meet as they could, with most safety.

And *Mede*'s saying, that *Clemens*'s Divine Ordinance, for the place of Church Service, is to be found in the Analogy of the Old Testament; seems very strange. For the Temple at *Jerusalem* was the only place God appointed for the *Jewish* Worship. And should the Christians by Analogy have but one Temple? They had also many Synagogues, which our Churches more resemble; yet where did God prescribe the place wherein they were to be built? And as to his Principle, *That as the Divine Majesty is most sacred, and incommunicable, so the things wherewith he is served, should not be common, but appropriate to that end.* This proves nothing of the place, but only its qualification, that it ought to be appropriate, whereof any place is capable: nor doth *Clemens* mention any such separate or appropriate places; of which we shall have occasion to speak more hereafter. As also how this Analogy hath misled him and several others, to assert the holiness of Places by Dedication, and Temples, Priests, Altars, and proper Sacrifices under the Gospel.

SECT. 7.

In the Second Century, Mr. *Mede* begins with the Testimonies of *Ignatius* the Martyr, *A. D.* 107. First with his confessed Epistle *ad Magnesios*; and then with the spurious *ad Antiochenos*.

But had he lived to have seen what is now extant, of and concerning these Epistles, by the great Luminaries of Learning in this Age, A. B. *Usher*, *Dally*, Bp. *Pearson*, *Larock*, *&c.* he would never have laid such stress upon them. The manifest difference between the ancient genuine Copies, and the latter, is evident by their Translations; particularly that of *Cains* College in *Cambridge*, which A. B. *Usher* prefers to the common Greek Copies. Wherein this very place εἰς τὸν ναὸν Θεοῦ, *&c.* is quite differently rendred from *Mede*'s; carrying the words for an unity in Doctrine, not Devotion: and that they should all come into Christ, as into one Temple and Altar, making him both; as alluding to 1 *Pet.* 2. 4. where the one Temple, into the which we are built up, coming unto him; and one

Altar Jesus Christ, and spiritual Sacrifices offered to God, in him as on an Altar, whereby they become acceptable.

Not to insist upon ναὸς, or *Temple*, no ways agreeing to the meeting places of the Primitive Christians: as both *Bellar. de Rom. Pontif. l.* 3. *c.* 13. and *Vedelius* hath shewn sufficiently, from the Ancient Fathers. And that which follows in *Mede*, of one Bishop, and one Altar, in every Church, is not only alien to the scope of *Ignatius*, but the Truth also. For the Church of *Ephesus* had ὁπισκόπους, or *Bishops*, *Acts* 20. 28. so had the *Philipians*, 1. 1. and of *Jerusalem*, *Narcissus* and *Alexander*, who at the same time jointly governed the Church, as *Eusebius* relates. *Gerson Bucer* in's Answer to *Downam*'s Sermon, *p.* 302. proves the like in other Churches, by ten instances: and *Vedelius* the same, *Exercit.* 8. *in Epist. Ignat. c.* 3. And *Epiphanius* of old, professed that the Church of *Alexandria* was singular in this, of having but one Bishop. It's true, the Inscription of the 7 Epistles, *Apoc. c.* 2 & 3. each, to the particular Angel of the Church, seems to imply that they had but one apiece. Which yet Mr. *Mede* himself sufficiently shews is inconsequent, in's Comment on *Apocal. p.* 265. where he observes it the course in Scripture, to attribute that to one Angel, which is performed by the Ministry of many. What's alledged from *Justin Martyr* is answered by *Bucer*; and *Sozomen* acquaints us, (*Hist. Eccl. l.* 7. *c.* 3.) That even Villages had their Bishops; and no wonder then, if one *Lords Table* in each might suffice to make them correlatives.

Mr. *Mede* proceeds with another proof out of *Ignatius*'s Epistle *ad Antiochenos*, (wherein he salutes the Keepers of the holy Doors) concluding thence holy Houses. This Epistle he endeavours to perswade us is genuine (contrary to the judgment of all other *Protestants*) from sundry probabilities.

But this is a strange way of reasoning, That it's likely such a thing should be done, and therefore it was done. And to say, because the *Antiochians* were his own Flock, I think rather makes it improbable; because he had sufficiently established them in the Faith before he left them; which, when he went thence to *Rome*, to receive the Crown of Martyrdom, he endeavoured by his Epistles to do for other Churches. And surely they would have been careful above all other Churches, in keeping their own Pastor's Letter, if he had sent them one. And was not *Polycarp* as likely to be acquainted

ed with this, as the reſt. Beſides that, if he or *Euſebius* had had any inkling of ſuch an Epiſtle, ſurely they would have mentioned it, tho they could not meet with it. And how doth *Mede* prove any ſuch Officers in the Primitive Churches? that which he alledges for this from the *Apoſtolical Conſtitutions*, falſly father'd on *Clemens*, is yet ſtranger. For beſides others, my Learned Countriman *Cook*, in's *cenſura Scriptorum*, hath detected ſo much vanity, and many Lyes therein (whereof he reckons Eight) beſides the cenſures of *Athanaſius*, the 6 Synod in *Trullo*, *Binius*, *Baronius*, *Bovius* and *Bellarmine*; that I wonder Mr. *Mede*, who knew all this, ſhould once offer to produce them. I know Mr. *Cook* and many Learned Divines reject all *Ignatius*'s Epiſtles: altho others, conſidering the Teſtimonies of the Ancients, acknowledge 7 for genuine, ſpecified by *Euſebius*, *Hierom* and others, tho robbed of ſome paſſages mentioned by the Fathers; and alſo have a number of beggarly patches added to his Purple, as A. B. *Uſher* ſaith: Of which 7, this *ad Antiochenos* is none, and therefore not genuine; for more were not found nor acknowledged by *Polycarp* (who compoſed them together) *Euſeb. Hierome*, *Sophronius* and *Ruffinus*.

What *Mede* obſerves beſides, is the Argument of *Baronius An.* 109. *numb.* 19. and *Gretſer* againſt *Whitaker de S. Script. l.* 4. *c.* 7. Which I ſhall not need to anſwer, it being done already ſo fully by *Vedelius* on *Ignatius*'s Epiſtles (whom *Mede* more eſpecially undertakes in this Treatiſe) in's *pref. c* 3. (wherein he refutes *Martialis*, *Maſtræus*, *Baronius* and *Bellarmine*) and his Exercitation on this Epiſtle: that I need not mention, *Cook*, *Scultetus*, *Rivet*, *Gerhard*, *Erockman*, &c.

Mede's next Teſtimony, is from two Epiſtles of *Pius* the Firſt, Biſhop of *Rome*; relating in the former how *Eupretpia*, *titulum domus ſuæ pauperibus reſignavit, ubi nunc cum pauperibus noſtris commorantes miſſas agimus*; *reſigned the Title of her houſe to the Poor, where now* (ſaith *Pius*) *we reſiding with our poor, ſay Maſs.* And in the latter of a Presbyter that erected a *Titulus* or Church.

To this, which *Baronius* alledged before to the ſame purpoſe, *an.* 57. *numb.* 98, 99, 100. and *Vedelius* anſwered: We further ſay, (1.) Theſe Epiſtles are forged, as *Cauſabon*'s *Exercit.* 16. ſhews, For if *Maſs* was ſo early, *how came it*, ſaith he, *that no footſteps thereof is extant in approved Authors, for above* 300 *Years?* And Biſhop *Morton* in's Book of the Maſs

l. 1.

l. 1. §. 1. not before St. *Ambrose* time, about *A. D.* 373. who uses it in another Notion than *Papists* do since. And *Morney* of the Mass, *l.* 1. *c.* 1. saith it was unknown for 400 years.

Not to mention the many Authors, who have handled this Argument of the Mass, against *Bellarmine*, and other *Papists* largely. I shall only name *du Moulin* on the Mass in *French*, and more largely in *Latine*, *c.* 1. for the Pedigree of the Mass. (2.) We answer, This was most likely some room in the House (seeing they dwelt therein) where they said Mass; and were it the whole House, yet was it but a private one, which scarce any wise man would call a Temple. And for the name of *Title*, that was given at pleasure. So that were these spurious Epistles authentick, they neither prove our adversaries Opinion, nor disprove ours.

Mr. *Mede* produceth next *Theophilus Antiochenus*, *l.* 2. *ad Antolycum*; who saith, *God hath given Synagogues, which we call holy Churches*, &c. Which yet is confest by him to be doubtful. *For* (saith he) *if it were probable* Synagogue *was here taken, as usually in the New Testament for a place, then* Church *likewise for a place.*

To which we say, that if Church, in a hundred places of the New Testament, be taken for a Congregation: then 'tis most probable, it's so taken here. And the sense of the words makes this evident; for *Theophilus* compares Heresies to rocky Islands; and the wholesome Doctrine of Truth and Holiness, to good and habitable Islands; and not the places of Truth and Heresies.

The last Author in this 2d Century alledged, is *Clemens Alexandrinus*; who useth the word ἐκκλησία or *Church*, for the Place, and not the Congregation only, *Stromat. l.* 7. And so again in the story of the young man, who had left the Church, and betook himself to a Mountain with Robbers.

That Christians had places of meetings is beyond all doubt; but we say in private Houses and Places for 200 years and upwards. Nor doth *Clemens* or any other, prove they had publick Oratories. And *Vedelius*, *p.* 74. upon this passage of *Clemens*, shews, they did not think this appellation so proper and convenient. Therefore *Salvian* 200 years after, *l.* 3. *de gub. Dei*, *Itaque Ecclesias vel potius Templa*, &c. correcting the impropriety, in using *Churches*, for the places of assembling, and preferring the word *Temples*.

And

And for the opposition of *Church* and *Mountain*, in the story of the young man, that became Captain to a Band of Robbers: The sense is plain, that he left the company of Christians, rather than the place of their Assembly, to associate with Robbers on the Mountains.

Thus for the two first Centuries, we have heard the noise of our Adversaries Artillery, which was nothing but Powder, and vanished into Smoak, without any Shot, that might in the least wound our cause.

SECT. 8.

Mr. *Mede* goes on with the 3d Century, wherein we shall follow him at the Heels, tho not obliged thereto, by our Assertion. For I know no *Protestant* that in this Century denies Christian Oratories; but only in the two first. And therefore 'tis not fair to feign Adversaries, and represent us as denying that we willingly grant. We know well, the Church being considerably increased, Oratories were built; and the fate that followed them, namely, to be demolished. For *Eusebius* relates, how before *Diocletian*'s days, there was both an enlargement of Churches formerly built; and an addition of new, more large and stately than the former, which were also destroyed in his Reign; and towards the end of this 3d Age the Christians not only questioned for affording their private Houses to meet in, but moreover tortur'd for it. Add hereunto, that *Mede* still goes on to pervert the state of the Question: as if private Houses and secret places in sore Persecutions (which none denies) were publick Oratories, Churches or Temples. The first Author cited by him is *Tertullian* in three places, whereof the first hath reference to the Assembly; and if to the place, yet only to the time of Worship; for which an upper room served; as *Hospinian* (*de orig. Templ. c.* 3.) explains him; and the second citation implies as much, where 'tis said their House was *in æditis & apertis*, *in high and open places*, as their *cœnacula* or upper rooms were; seeing in Temples tho never so large, people are upon the Ground.

I shall not meddle with what is added of Churches anciently looking Eastward; (for which *Bellarmine* gives five reasons, *c.* 3. *de cultu sanct.*) further than by referring to such Antiquaries, as have treated thereof; *Walfridus Strabo*, *Hospinian* and

and others. The 3d is in's Book *de corona militis*; ſeveral others being waved: (all which are brought to the ſame purpoſe by *Baronius*, *A. D.* 57. *num.* 99. except that one out of *l. de ſpectaculis.*) There *c.* 3. its ſaid, thoſe that were to be baptiſed, *firſt made their abrenunciation of the Devil*, &c. *in the Church, and after again at the Water.* Upon which *Mede*, to ſerve his own Hypotheſis, ſuppoſeth their Baptiſteries, were not then, as now our Fonts, within, but without the Church, and often in places very remote from it. But how will he, or any other prove that there were any Baptiſteries in *Tertullian*'s time, diſtinct from the places of their Aſſemblies. *Hoſpinian* that was well verſed in Eccleſiaſtical Antiquities, finds none before *Conſtantine*'s time, *de orig. baptiſterii*, *p.* 30, 31. For as no place for Baptiſm was prescribed by Chriſt, or his Apoſtles, but left indifferent, and accordingly uſed at firſt: ſo we find nothing certain concerning this in the Primitive Church. The Hiſtory of *Baſilides* in *Euſeb. l.* 6. *c.* 5. manifeſts that ſome were baptiſed in Priſons, and *Cyprian*'s Epiſtle to *Magnus*, that ſick perſons were baptiſed in their Beds. Nor doth it follow, the *Church* here is not the *Aſſembly*, becauſe that was alſo at the Baptiſtery. For if there were ſuch (as I think there was not) yet a part more likely was only there; and probably the abrenunciation was not the ſame day. However, without all doubt, it was not made but when the Church was aſſembled, and reſpected the Aſſembly and not the Place. Conſider but thoſe times, and what *Tertullian* ſaith to encourage the Chriſtians to meet, notwithſtanding the danger thereof, *Si Fides transferre poteſt montem, annon poteſt militem? Can Faith remove a Mountain, and can it not remove a Soldier?* and again, *If you cannot keep your Dominicals in the Day, keep them in the Night:* and, then judge, if he can be thought a ſupport to our Adverſaries.

His next Witneſs is *Hyppolytus*, who in's Tract *de Antichriſto*, ſaith, then οἱ ναοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ οἱ οἶκοι ἔσονται, *The Temples of God ſhould be as common Houſes:* And *Churches every where demoliſhed*, &c.

This Author is cited by the *Rhemiſts*, to prove that Antichriſt ſhould aboliſh their Maſs: but of ſmall or no account with *Proteſtants*. For he makes Antichriſt to be the Devil, appearing in the ſhape of a Man; and that *John* the *Evangeliſt* is not yet dead, but ſhall continue with *Enoch* and *Elias* till the time

time of Antichriſt. And lived *in Cryptis*, or ſubterraneous Vaults, as *Baronius* writes *A. D.* 259. *numb.* 10. where he officiated alſo, as *Euſebius* relates. So that *Mede*'s inference, that he was well acquainted with ſuch places, as Temples and Churches, ſeems leſs probable, (ſeeing we read of none before) than that this Tract is ſuppoſititious. Beſides that *vaõs* agrees not to Chriſtian Churches, as both *Bellarmine* and *Vedelius* have largely proved, which we mentioned before.

For the ſame time *Lampridius* an Hiſtorian is cited, who reports, *Quod cum Chriſtiani quendam locum, qui publicus fuerat, occupaſſent; contra Popinarii dicerent, ſibi eum deberi;* Alexander Mammeæ *Imperator reſcripſit: melius eſſe, ut quomodo cunque Deus illic colatur, quam Popinariis dedatur. That when the Chriſtians had poſſeſt a publick place; which the Victualers challeng'd to belong to them;* Alexander *the Emperour determined; it was better, that God ſhould be there any manner of way worſhipped, than that the Victualers ſhould have it.*

This Paſſage is brought by *Baronius*, *A. D.* 57. *num.* 101. for the ſame purpoſe; who yet afterwards, *A. D.* 224. confeſſeth, that at that time the Chriſtians had no Church there, but choſe that place to build one in. For which he alledgeth a fabulous Miracle. But *Platina* in the life of *Calixtus*, believes not this, by reaſon of the frequent Perſecutions in thoſe days. *Calixtus* himſelf having ſuffered Martyrdom. And *Baronius* acknowledgeth, that Perſecution was frequent in this Emperour *Alexander*'s days, and divers ſuffered Martyrdom, even the Biſhop of *Rome* himſelf. So that 'tis doubtful, whether they built any publick Oratory, in that publick place, during his Reign; and if they did, 'tis the firſt we read of in any Claſſic Author.

The next Author is *Gregory* of *Neocæſarea*, Sirnamed *Thaumatourgus*, who in an Epiſtle called *canonica*, deſcribes the Diſcipline then in uſe, with the diſtinct and regular places for *Penitents*, (who ſtood without the Gate of the Oratory) *Auditors*, and others that ſtood within, as the *Catechumens* and *Faithful* in diſtinct places.

And further in's Life written by *Gregory Niſſen*, 'tis ſaid, that he was a great Founder and Erecter of Churches; whereof that built by him at *Neocæſarea* in *Pontus* (where he was Biſhop) *Gregory Niſſen* ſaith, was ſtill ſtanding in his time, having remained unſhaken in a great Earthquake,

which had thrown down all other Edifices both publick and private.

Now let it be granted, That this Canonical Epistle is genuine; tho I will not say, as *Bellarmine*, that without controversie 'tis so; even for that which he saith is certain. That this *Gregory* made a short Confession of Faith, which he learned of *John* the *Evangelist*, appearing unto him in the company of the blessed Virgin, the Mother of God: and the many monstrous Fables father'd on this devout Man, by the name of Miracles. But because *Balsamon*, the learned Canonist, hath commented upon it, I shall not reject it; tho neither Christ our Lord and Lawgiver, nor his Apostles, no nor the Church of the First Age, (wherein like occasions were given by defection) ever made such orders, or used such distinctions of places: which any considering man will judge, more befitting peaceable than persecuting times.

And (2.) We further grant, as we have several times suggested, that in this Third Century the Christians had their publick Oratories, small at the first, and afterwards enlarged, as *Eusebius* testifies, *Hist. l.* 8. *c.* 1. tho most in secret, by reason of Persecution. So that neither this, nor the following Testimonies, prejudice our Assertion: nor prove theirs, of such publick and separate places of Worship, both in and ever since the Apostles times.

But how *Gregory Nissen* came to believe, that the Temple *Thaumaturgus* built, continued till his time, I know not. For whosoever considers the many Edicts, made by Heathen Emperors between these two *Gregory*'s days, for demolishing them all, will think this incredible. Except some Ruderaes remaining, and a Temple after built upon them, was accounted the same; like as that which we read in the Gospel, of *Solomon*'s Porch. Or that it was preserved by a Miracle, as *Baronius* thinks, and that a greater, than its preservation in the Earthquake. For the Decree of *Diocletian* was very general and severe, for demolishing all Churches; which both *Theodoret* and *Eusebius* write, was so punctually executed, that all were pulled down, not one by them excepted. And this Decree came forth from *Nicomedia*, a City in *Bithynia*, upon which *Pontus* bordered, wherein *Neocæsarea* stood, and therefore very unlikely this should be spared.

But

But if any have so strong a Faith to believe, what is reported of this great Wonder-worker *Gregory*, he may possibly think that he had sufficient power to restrain *Diocletian*'s Agents, and defend the Church he built. For *Baronius* at the Year 253. *num.* 135, 136, 137. relates what power he had over Devils, to cast them out of their Temples, and drive them out of any place, whither he pleased, and restore them also at his pleasure: which he did, to shew his power, to one in writing under his hand, saith *Baronius*, in these words, *Gregorius Satanæ, ingredere*; *Gregory to Satan, enter in*, that was into his Temple again. And *Bellarmine* relates another Miracle of him upon this very Argument, *c.* 4. *de cultu Sanct.* saying, That when he would have built a Church, and wanted room, by reason of a Rock, that border'd on the place, where he would build it, he by his prayers removed it away. Mr *Mede* was wiser than to mention this, for *Gregory*'s building of Churches. And indeed none can imagine, how much prejudice such fabulous Miracles and lying Legends (decryed and detested even by many sober and Learned *Papists*) hath done to Christianity. Let but any one read a Pamphlet Printed this very Year, of a Conference between a *Jew* and a *Jesuite*, at *Amsterdam*; concerning Christ being the true Messiah, which this undertaking to prove by his Miracles; was replied upon by the other, with a Number as great, out of many *Popish* Authors, insomuch that the *Jew* quite confounded the *Jesuite*.

And wheras Mr. *Mede* notes, that a litle before the persecution of *Decius* (which was A. D. 252.) the Christians erected Oratories, in the Name of Christ. I desire *Baronius* may be consulted, and then let any one judge, how improbable it is that Christians had publick Churches, with such distinction of places, as is mentioned or built such Publick Oratories, as our Adversaries say. For *Decius* gave expres order to forbid all Christian assemblies, upon pain of Death, threatning accurate observing them; (becaus many Heathens were converted thereby to Christianity.) As appears by *Æmilianus* his writing to *Dionysius* Bishop of *Alexandria* in *Eusеb. l. 7. c. 9. vel* 10. and *Baronius ad A. D.* 260. *Num.* 17. who further relates, how their very *Cœmateria* or burying places (which were Vaults under ground, called *cryptæ*, as *Baronius shews A. D.* 259 *num.* 16.) usually a Mile or more from their Cities (which were often after some time discovered; and then how dangerous it was

to meet there, he shews. *A* 255) were now strictly forbidden them in particular, as well as in the general all other places whatsoever.

Cyprian contemporary with *Gregory*, is next alledged for Christian Oratories. (1) In his book *de Opere* and *Eleemosynis*, by the Name of *Dominicum* brought also by *Bellarm. c.* 4 *de cultu Sanct.* (2) In 55 Epistle, by the Title of *Ecclesia*.

We never doubted, but Christians had from the first Oratories, or places of Meeting: And that in this Century some publick, which as the Church increased, were inlarged. But that even in *Cyprian*'s time their assembling were in subterraneous Vaults; both at *Alexandria*, as we have shewn; and *Rome*, as is clear by Pope *Cornelius*'s Letter to the Bishop of *Vienna*, as *Baronius* testifies *A.* 255. *n.* 47. and here at *Carthage* in *Africa*, *A.* 260. *n.* 37. Where the Proconsul urged *Cyprian* himself with the Emperors Edict, *ne in aliquibus locis conciliabula fiant, nec cæmeteria ingrediantur*; *that the Christians should not meet in any places, nor enter into their Cœmeteries.* In which they usually celebrated the holy Mysteries; which *Pamelius* calls the *Sacrifice*; but *Goulartius*, *the Word, Sacraments and Prayers*; performed only, when the Church assembled. Nor is the opposition mentioned, of any force, as we shew'd on 1 *Cor.* 11. 22.

Another Contemporary cited, is *Dionysius Alexandrinus* in's Epistle to *Basilides*, declaring his Opinion, That Women during the time of their Separation, ought not to enter into the Church, which he calls *the House of God.* By which we learn, saith *Mede*, not only the Christians had their Houses of Worship, but a religious respect also, to difference them from common places.

To this we say, as formerly, That Christians had always places for meeting in, but still whether in private Houses, or in publick lies the question. And if but a Chamber in a private House, where they worshipped God, it was sufficient to denominate it the House of God, as well as a Cathedral. And that their Assemblies then were very private, appears in that they were forbidden on pain of death (as we have shewn) and yet where this is related by *Eusebius*, *Dionysius* testifies, that nevertheless they kept them. But surely not in the usual places, where they had easily been discovered, to the loss of their lives; but in all likelihood often changed the places,

for

for their ſecurity. And whether every ſuch, was thereby ſo ſanctified, that it was unlawful for a menſtruous Woman to enter thereinto, let any one judge. Nor was this a Canon, as *Mede* calls it, *Baronius* hath made apparent againſt *Balſamon*; and by the equity of a contrary courſe taken by Pope *Gregory*, in regard that *legalia* or *ceremonials* are now abdicated. And if it were in force, it relates not to the Place ſimply, but the Offices there performed, and the time thereof, which ſuppoſe the Congregation preſent, from which ſuch an one was to be excluded, whether the meeting was on a Mountain, or in an Houſe, or under Ground, *in Caves and Dens of the Earth.*

Nor need Mr. *Mede* tell us, ſuch places were known to the Gentiles, and called *worſhipping places*. For when the Chriſtians were grown ſo numerous, before this time of *A D.* 260. as *Tertullian* thinks, near to equalize the Heathens; their Aſſemblies could not poſſibly be concealed, whether above or under the Ground (eſpecially when they enjoyed any tollerable freedom from Perſecution) as appears by two Reſcripts of *Gallienus* in *Euſeb. Hiſt. l.* 7. *c.* 12. one for reſtoring all places in general to the Chriſtians, and the other their Cœmiteries in particular.

Nor doth *Aurelian*'s Speech in *Vopiſcus* evince a publick place; nor the oppoſition between the Capitol and Church imply the place; but the Congregation rather, that ſtands in congruous oppoſition to the *Sibyls* Oracles. For they might be Maſters of the Chriſtian Oratories when they pleaſed, and there conſult of what they liſt, even of ſetting forth the Books of the *Sibyls.*

But Mr. *Mede* thinks his cauſe is ſupported by that of *Euſebius l.* 7. relating how *Paulus Samoſatenus* being depoſed by the Council, *Aurelian* decreed, that τῆς ἐκκλησίας οἶκος, *the Houſe of the Church*, ſhould be taken from him, *&c.* This *Bellarmine c.* 4. *de cultu ſanctorum*, and alſo our *Fuller* alledge to the like purpoſe. Yet both ours confeſs, that ſome interpret it of *domum Epiſcopalem, the Biſhops Houſe.* Belike *Chriſtopherſon*, tho a *Popiſh* Biſhop in Queen *Maries* days, and zealous for the Opinion of our Opponents. So *Baronius* takes it, *A. D.* 272. *num.* 18. and our Learned Antiquary Sir *H. Spelman*, *de non temerandis Eccleſiis*, *p.* 64. for a Houſe belonging to the Church of *Antioch.* And indeed 'tis not reaſonable to underſtand

ſtand it, of a publick Temple, as *Fuller* calls it; for to what purpoſe ſhould he keep that, which could be of no uſe to him, neither for an Habitation, nor for publick Worſhip, being deprived of his Biſhoprick for Hereſie, and *Domnus* in his place: and the Congregation could keep him out of, without troubling the Emperour. Nor is it denied, that in the time *Euſebius* mentions between the 9 and 10 Perſecution, for about 30 Years, ſeveral old Oratories or Churches were enlarged, and new built; like as 'tis manifeſt they were demoliſhed by *Diocleſian* 40 years after. And were the 3 places of *Euſebius* alledged, taken for the place; they ſpeak of no more than an Houſe or Houſes, which denotes them private, not publick, as Churches and Temples.

Mr. *Fuller* lays mighty ſtreſs on *Euſebius* calling them τὰ πάλαι οἰκοδομήματα, which he renders *priſca ædificia, ancient edifices:* and from thence infers, that therefore there were Oratories or Churches, even in the Apoſtles times. For he tells us, the Learned define *ſæculum, an age*, to denote 100 years: and that one age is not ſufficent to denominate houſes *priſca*, or *antient*; conſidering that *monas* an *unity*, is not to be accounted a number; wherefore they muſt be of two Ages at leaſt, or more, to be termed Ancient.

But all this is very ſtrange talk. For (1.) *Euſebius* hath nothing anſwerable to *ſæculum an age*. (2.) If *monas an unity* be no number; then one hundred years, or one thouſand. is no number; and ſo ſhould be inſufficient to denominate any thing ancient. (3) The Phraſe may either import the diſtance of time, between their erection and amplification; or the diſtance between their erection, and the time when *Euſebius* wrote, which was conſiderably longer, and more probably I think to be here meant. (4.) Let it be couſidered, that we read of no Edifices before *Decius* and *Valerians* Perſecution: and thoſe ſpecified only by *cœmiteria, places of Burial*, in which they had their *cryptæ, Vaults under Ground*; which were forbidden them, and again reſtored and granted them by *Gallienus*. Now this Perſecution by *Decius* and *Valerian*, was but about 40 years before *Diocleſian*'s: ſo that if we take the Phraſe for the time intervening, it imports no more than Edifices formerly built, and thoſe not very ancient. (5.) *New and Old*, are Terms of reſpect, and taken in great latitude; ſo that now a Man of an hundred years, is truly accounted

counted a very old man; tho in the *antediluvian* days, one of 200 but young, when Men lived to eight or nine hundred. And tho some of our Churches in *England* may be termed truly ancient, being perhaps of 6 or 700 years standing; yet the eldest in *Eusebius*'s time, could not be 300; nor hath any yet been proved to have been then an hundred years old. Such a Critick as Mr. *Fuller* might have observed the word πάλαι is such, being both variously rendred, and applied in the New Testament. Sometimes to great Antiquity, as *Mat.* 11. 21. *Hebr.* 1. 1. and *Jude* 4. Sometimes to things not long before, as 2 *Pet.* 1. 9. *He hath forgotten that he was purged from his* πάλαι ἁμαρτιῶν, *old sins*; and sometimes to that lately past, as *Mark* 15. 44. *Pilate asked the Centurion, if Jesus had been* πάλαι, *any while dead.* But the *Latin* Version *prisca ædificia, ancient Edifices*, better suited his Hypothesis; which made him adhere thereto rather than the Original *Greek*; which may well be rendred *priora ædificia, former edifices.*

Mr. *Mede*'s last Witness, which he saith will dispatch all at once, and depose for the whole, and thinks alone sufficient to carry his Cause, is *Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l.* 8. *c.* 1. Where describing those Halcyon days, from *Cyprian*'s Martyrdom to the Persecution of *Diocletian*, he shews the vast multitude of Christians and their Meetings, *cum antiquis illis ædificiis (i. e.* Oratories) *satis amplius loci non haberent, amplas spaciosasque in omnibus urbibus ex fundamentis, erexerunt ecclesias; so that having no longer room enough in their ancient buildings, (i. e.* Oratories, as he had named them) *they erected large and spacious Churches from their foundations, in all their Cities.* Here's not only Churches in those days, but such as might then be called τὰ πάλαι οἰκοδομήματα, ancient Edifices, which how far it may reach, let others judge.

But if this Witness will depose for the whole, there's no thanks due to Mr. *Mede*; considering that long before, this was dispatch'd; *Baronius* having alledged the same, and *Vedelius* answered him, (as he could not but know) *Exercit. in epist. ad Magnes. Tertio, Eusebii l.* 8. *c.* 1. *citat Baronius, & dicit eum asserere, longe ante Diocletiani tempora fuisse Ecclesias. Sed falsum est, &c. Thirdly, Baronius cites the 8th Book of Eusebius* c. 1. *and saith, that he affirmeth Churches to have been long before Diocletians time. But 'tis false to say, Eusebius speaks of the time long before Diocletians Reign. For he speaks only of that*

part

part of time, intermediating between the 9 and 10 Perſecution, (or according to the computation of others the 8th and 9th) as the ſeries of the preceeding ſtory, and the Text it ſelf ſufficiently ſhew. Now the Perſecution preceeding Diocleſian's *began* A. D. 272. *under the Emperour* Valerian, *and ended about* 10 *years after. And the Perſecution by* Diocleſian *began, as ſome account,* A. D. 306. *Whereby the ridiculouſneſs of* Baronius's *inference appears, viz. There were Churches long before the time of* Diocleſian; *therefore in the very days of the Apoſtles there were ſuch. As if I ſhould ſay,* Euſebius *teſtifies, That for about* 30 *years before* Diocleſian *there were Churches: therefore he ſaith that there were Churches* 300 *years before* Diocleſian. *But this courſe is frequently uſed by* Baronius, *that corrupter of Chronicles.*

But that *Mede* inſiſts on moſt, (as others before him) is that Phraſe in *Euſebius* πλαι οἰκοδομήματα *ancient Edifices.* Which how far it may reach, ſaith he, let others judge.

Belike he truſted more to his Readers forwardneſs, to embrace the ſuſpicions this Phraſe might raiſe, at firſt ſight in their minds, than his own improvement of it; that he turns it off with ſo ſhort and ſlender a Remark, which in ſhew was his moſt pregnant proof. Or knowing that *Fuller* had done his beſt on the Phraſe, waved the ſpeaking further thereon. However, having ſpoken ſufficiently, I think, to it in the former Paragraph, I need ſay nothing more in this.

But that *Euſebius* mentions there, and alſo *c.* 2. and 6. is very remarkable; and lets us ſee, that tho Proſperity be deſired of all, yet few can uſe it aright: ſo that we may conclude, if it were beſt for God's People, they ſhould enjoy it. For from *Valerian*'s Perſecution to *Diocleſian*'s, the Church had a comfortable calm (*Aurelian*'s Edict made for Perſecution, being never ſigned by him, God having terrified him with Lightning (as *Eutropius* and *Vopiſcus* affirm) and ſo ſtopt his wicked Tyranny.) But alas, inſtead of being better'd, they extreamly degenerated: So that *Euſebius* ſaith, God ſent that direful ſtorm of Perſecution on them under *Diocleſian*, for the corruptneſs of their lives and manners. *Maximè vero Eccleſiaſticorum, in quorum vultu ſimulationem, in corde dolum, verbis fallaciam cernere licuit: livore, ſuperbia, inimicitiis inter ſe certantes, tyrannidem totius quam ſacerdotium ſapere videbantur; Chriſtianæ pietatis omnino obliti; divina myſteria profanabant potius, quam celebrabant.* Which I forbear to *Engliſh.* Thoſe

that

that pleaſe may read more in *Fox*'s Martyrology in the 9th Primitive Perſecution: tho he miſreckon it, there having been no general Perſecution in *Aurelian*'s Reign, who as he himſelf ſaith, *rather intended, than moved Perſecution.* But for their wickedneſs followed the 10th. When their Churches were demoliſhed, their Bibles burnt, their Perſons puniſhed with all kinds of cruelty; neither Courtiers, nor Friends, not the Empreſs *Priſca*, nor Daughter *Valeria* ſpared; his Decree was *aut Deos Gentilium, aut mortem eligerent*; *That the Chriſtians ſhould chooſe either the Heathen Gods or Death.*

Of this Tenth and greateſt Perſecution, *Euſebius* in his 8th Book of Hiſtory. *Lactantius de mortibus Perſecutorum*, from 7 to 49 Chap. with the Notes in *Latin* of 1693, which are 10 times larger than the Text. And *Fox* in his firſt book of Martyrology, from *Euſebius* and ſeveral others, have written largely; which I ſhall not tranſcribe, but diſmiſs with this ſhort remark; That of all the 10 general Perſecutions, this laſt (which was the ſoreſt, and continued above Ten Years,) only reached *England*; wherein *Albanus* firſt, and very many after, ſealed their Faith in Chriſt with their blood; ſo that Chriſtianity was almoſt with the Scriptures, and Churches deſtroyed throughout the whole Kingdom, tho ſhortly after revived by the bleſſed *Conſtantine*.

Having now examined all our Adverſaries Witneſſes we leave the Impartial Reader to judge of their validity; and whether they prove the Chriſtians to have had any publick appropriate places for Worſhip in the two firſt Centuries. Which tho undoubtedly moſt fit and convenient always; yet in times of Perſecution, men muſt do as they may, and meet as ſecretly as they can, and be conſtrained, often to change their meeting places, and when private Houſes will not ſerve for ſecreſie, to ſeek out Vaults under ground, where they may worſhip God. And yet not even in the moſt ſecret and retired places, without fear of their enemies, and danger of their lives: which ſhews our happineſs in this regard, above theirs, who were much better than we.

There is but one ſcruple, that I can imagine, remaining: and that is, tho theſe places were private, yet they might be, as *Mede* terms them, *appropriate*.

To which I anſwer, that his firſt Argument for his Opinion, which immediatly follows, from their worſhipping towards

the East, implies that he takes them for Publick, and purposely built accordingly for that end. And (2). who ever diligently peruses his Treatise, will see that he founds their *appropriation* (as also their holiness, of which in the next *Dissertation*) on their *Consecration*, (or as he sometimes calls it *Dedication.*) Now if we consider when this begun, *Platina in vitis Pontif.* tells us, That *Telesphorus* having suffer'd Martyrdom, in the first year of *Antonius Pius* (which was about the year of our Lord 142.) *Hyginus* an *Athenian* succeeded him. Who ordained these two things. First the use of those Witnesses we commonly call Godfathers and Godmothers, in the Administration of the Sacrament of Baptism. Which was then, I confess, more necessary, by reason the generallity of those amongst whom the Christians lived, were Heathens. And therefore in case the Parents, on whom it is incumbent to see their Children educated in the Christian Religion, came to die; they that were Sponsors, might take care to see them brought up therein. Which Institution (as likewise Confirmation) is now degenerated into a meer Formality: few regarding their solemn Engagements made for that end. And (2.) he ordained also *Templorum consecrationes*; *the Consecration of Temples*, that or Churches, being the usual Names, given to all places for Gods Worship, in after Ages. So that *Consecration* being but introduced in the second Century; if *Mede* takes it in the usual sense; his Opinion that *There were appropriate Places for Christian Worship both in the Apostles days, and ever since*, falls to the Ground; except it can be proved, that some of them at least, lived so long.

But if he takes it for a private House, or some room therein, where the Church met together, as he seems in the beginning, and by the expressions of *the Church in their House*: then whensoever any Owners thereof, gave leave for the Christians to assemble therein, their *permission* was a *Consecration* thereof, whereby they appropriated the same to the Churches use; and so, according to his Tenets, employed them no more for their own Civil use, being appropriate to a Sacred. Or else some pious Christians, gave their Houses, as he thinks, and dedicated them to the Church for a Meeting Place, by which Dedication it was appropriated. But neither of these can be reasonably imagined. Considering (1.) That we read of several that sold their Possessions, for the Main-

Maintenance of the Poor: but we read of none that gave their Houſes to the Church for meeting in. (2.) The multitude of Chriſtians increaſing, many Houſes were requiſite to contain them, as we have formerly obſerved. (3.) How often in thoſe bloody Perſecutions, they were forced to ſhift their Meeting-Places, to ſhun the loſs of their Eſtates, Liberties and Lives, we may eaſily conclude. And laſtly, Had any either granted, or given any Houſe, or certain place, for ſuch an uſe, as therein conſtantly to aſſemble: they had thereby, without all doubt, been quickly diſcovered, certainly diſperſed, and often times moſt ſeverely puniſh'd. So that tho we are not to queſtion the readineſs of many that were able, nor their pious liberality: ſo we muſt alſo conſider their Prudence, the times wherein they lived, and what was moſt conducible to their preſervation, that they might not run themſelves on the rocks of deſtruction.

SECT. 9.

Our Opponents beſides the Authorities mentioned, produce ſeveral Arguments for their Opinion; whereof 3 are made uſe of by *Mede*, which we ſhall now conſider.

Firſt, *It's certain*, ſaith he, *That in their Sacred Aſſemblies, Chriſtians uſed then to Worſhip and Pray towards the Eaſt.* Which how it could be done, with any order and conveniency, is not eaſie to be conceived; unleſs we ſuppoſe the places, wherein they worſhipped to have been ſituated and accommodated accordingly, that is choſen and appointed to that end. This he had touched on before, from *Tertullian* in the beginning of the 3d Century; for which no authority is vouched, but *that only* of the forged *Apoſtolical Conſtitutions*, falſly aſcribed to *Clemens*.

Here let me obſerve, whereas *Mede* ſaith *to worſhip and pray*, *Bellarmine c. 3 de cultu ſanct.* rightly reſtrains to prayers only, and thoſe made publickly in the Temples. For having mentioned ſeveral Authors for this, adds, *Et omnes illi Veteres, qui ſcribunt Apoſtolicam eſſe traditionem, ut oremus converſi ad Orientem; id præcipue ſervari par eſt, in ſolemnibus precibus, quæ funduntur in Templis: And all thoſe Ancients which write, that 'tis an Apoſtolical Tradition, that we pray turned towards the Eaſt:*

that ought especially to be observed in the solemn Prayers, which are made in Temples.

Secondly, Tho we grant this an ancient Custom; yet is it without Command, or Example in the Scriptures; for Christ never required it, nor was it practised from the beginning of Christianity. Where's the Proof they *then* used so to Worship? Or when this Custom first came up? For as to the *Constitutions*, rightlier to be called *Apocryphal* than *Apostolical* (as we have formerly observed) they deserve no Credit at all.

Thirdly, If this necessarily implies Edifices so situated, which I question, and he supposes, (but hath not proved) then those ὑπερῶα, *upper rooms*, the *cœnaculum Sionis*, that *upper room in Sion*, and *private Houses*, which were the first Churches, he grants in the beginning of his Treatise, were all so situate, which I hardly think, he himself thought. And much less that the Cœmeteries and Vaults under Ground, which so many Authors mention for their Meeting Places (as we shall shew hereafter) were so: or had such Light Eastward, more than from other Quarters of the Heavens.

Fourthly, *Bellarmine* there treating of the Form of Christian Churches, saith only, *Ut plurimum eas ad Orientem conversas fuisse, & quatuor latera habuisse, quibus quatuor Mundi partes aspicerent. That for the most part they were turned towards the East, and had four sides, turned towards the four parts of the World.* Likewise *Walfridus Strabo de rebus Eccles.* c. 4. saith, *Majorem partem Ecclesiarum ita fabricari; That the greater part of Churches were so made.* So that by their saying, all were not so; some might be round, as we have an ancient Church in *Cambridge* so built, which some say, was the usual Form of the *Jewish* Synagogues, such as the lesser, at *Amsterdam*. And some sited otherwise than Eastward, as the Church of *Antioch* in *Syria*, as *Socrates l.* 5. *c.* 21. testifies. And if they were oblong, and stood East and West, seeing they had four sides, 'tis meant doubtless of the Chancel, which was Eastward. Of which distinction in Churches; when first it began, or who was the Author thereof, is not set down by any Writers I have met with. Tho we know, in *Constantine*'s time, when stately Churches were erected, this was used. And if we take this in the first Ages, for private places, frequently stiled *Oratories* and *Chappels*, such as were in Houses

Houſes and Vaults under Ground, or above in the open Air; to ſay their aſpect was Eaſtward, is to beg the queſtion, and cannot be proved. We may well imagine, thoſe built, were rather according to the conveniency of the place, or pleaſure of the Founders. As the Chappels of *Emanuel* and *Sidney* College in *Cambridge*, which ſtood rather North and South. Tho the former hath now a new one built in Mode and Figure; and is no more to be derided, as formerly, by *Cartwright*, an *Oxford* Poet:

Much like the Chappel Ominous,
Of 'th Colledge called God with us.

Nor the other now in danger to be demoliſhed, as Mr. *Mathews*, an ancient Fellow thereof, told me, was in the days of A. B. *Laud*, threatned therewith.

I confeſs *Bellarmine* brings ſeveral Authors for this ſituation of Churches; but none that proves there was always ſuch, nor that they were all ſuch; as alſo for the Ceremony of praying towards the Eaſt, for which he produces 5 reaſons, (ſuch as they are) I ſhall briefly repreſent them, to ſhew the ſorry grounds of this practice, which takes away the liberty Chriſt hath left us, to advance a Cuſtom of humane Conſtitution.

1. Becauſe Paradiſe was in the *Eaſt*, and we being here but ſtrangers, ſhould labour to regain our ancient Country, which we were caſt out of. Which is produced by ſeveral other *Papiſts*, as the Opinion of the Fathers, and lately by the Learned *Huetius c.* 3. *de ſitu Paradiſi.*

As if Paradiſe, where ever it was (the place thereof having puzzl'd ſo many Learned Inquiſitors) whether in or near *Meſopotamia*, or elſewhere, was not as well Weſt to the Chriſtians beyond it, as Eaſt to us on this ſide. Or that we were to look after a Terreſtial Paradiſe, more than a Cœleſtial, whereof that was but a Type. And as the Saints in the Old Teſtament lookt from all parts toward the Temple, as a Type of our bleſſed Saviour; ſo under the New, we are directed to look towards Heaven, as the Habitation of our Heavenly Father, where Chriſt ſits at his right hand to make Interceſſion for us.

2. Be-

2. Becauſe the Sun riſing there, 'tis the moſt excellent part of the World.

But ſuppoſing its motion, doth it not continually ariſe in the ſeveral Horizons, to thoſe of the ſame Latitude throughout the World and there ſet to their *Antipodes?* ſo that the Eaſt of *Jeruſalem*, as *Gregory* explains it, muſt needs be Weſt, to the further parts of the World. And how can that be moſt excellent to any, which is equally alike to all?

3. Becauſe Chriſt whom we Worſhip, is the *light of the world*, *Vir Oriens*, *the Man of the Eaſt*.

Its true that as the bleſſed God, is called *light*, which of all creatures is the moſt pure: So Chriſt is called, *the Sun of righteouſneſs*, *the light of the world*, *and the day ſpring from on high* &c. But this is only metaphorically, in regard of his illuminating us, and not at all to the place of Eaſt or Weſt, North or South, all being equally alike to him for that end.

4. Becauſe Chriſt was crucified with his Face Weſtward, ſo that we look Eaſtward to behold his countenance. And he aſcended towards the Eaſt, and from thence ſhall come to Judgment.

But where's the proof of that poſture in his Crucifiction? Not in the Scrpture ſure. And how ſhould the Chriſtians beyond *Jeruſalem* pray towards his Face ſo, who lived in *Perſia*, and other Eaſtern Countries. *Math.* 24. 27. is meant of his Goſpel Diſpenſation, or his ſpeedy coming to deſtroy *Jeruſalem*, as *Hammond* and *Lightfoot* think; or by that Emblem to Judgment: the point of Eaſt in the Heavens, being no where ſo to all the World he is to Judge.

5. Becauſe the *Jews* prayed, and pray towards the Weſt, we towards the Eaſt; to ſignifie theirs to be the killing Letter, and ours the Vivificating Spirit, and that the Veil ſtill remains over their hearts, which we converted unto the Lord, have laide aſide.

That the *Jews* at the Temple looked Weſtward, was becauſe the Mercy-Seat, in the moſt holy Place was at the Weſt end thereof. But that they do ſo ſtill, as *Gregory* alſo ſaith, I think is a miſtake; I never obſerved it in any of their Synagogues, tho I have ſeen ſeveral, and their Worſhip: yet I never ſaw any People ſo regardleſs therein as the preſent Generation of the *Jews*. But why may we not pray in the ſame poſture with the *Jews* of old, which were Gods People, and had his direction? as well

well as in the posture of those Gentile Idolaters that worshipped the Sun (*Ezek.* 8. 16.) as the *Persians* and many other Nations? Truly if you will believe the Cardinal, because this posture signifies so much more excellent things than the *Jewish*, which he there mentions; even the difference between the Gospel and Christianity, from the present Religion of the accursed *Jews*, the Enemies of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here recommend me to the man that hath so strong Faith, as to believe a bare posture can denote such great things, to which it hath no tendency, or likeness at all.

But if any one hath list and leisure, to see a deal of dry Learning thrown away on this subject of praying towards the *East*; they may peruse the 18th *Chap.* of *Gregory*'s Notes on *Zachary* 6. *v.* 12. Who had written also a Treatise, he intituled *Alkibla* (*i. e.* the place toward which men worship) as the Publisher of his posthumous Works acquaints us: the loss whereof he laments, tho for my part, I think it not great.

Before I pass to another Argument, let me set down the Opinion of *Strabo* in the place fore-mentioned; (an Author near 800 Years old, when Ceremonies and Superstition were in Vogue, and near their Altitude) concerning the site of Churches Eastward. *Et quia diversitas Idololatriæ, diversis modis Templa extruxerat: non magnopere curabant illius temporis justi, quam in partem orationis loca converterent, dum tantum videretur, ubi eliminatæ sunt Dæmonum sordes, ibi Deum creatorem omnium, qui ubique est, coli & adorari.* *And because Temples were built after divers manners, according to the different ways of Idolatry: The righteous men of those days, did not much care which way the places of Prayer stood; their consideration being only this, that look where the filth and abomination of Devils were cast out of Doors, there God the Creator of all, who is every where, might be worshipped and adored.*

Now that by the righteous men of those times, which cared not which way they converted their places, or selves in Prayer to God, were the times of the Conversion of the Empire from Idolatry to Christianity, is plain by what preceds, *c.* 3. where he saith, *After the time was come, wherein the true Worshippers in Spirit and Truth, not in* Jerusalem *only, or in the Hill of* Samaria, *that is not locally but spiritually, began to worship the Father, and the Doctrine of Salvation went forth into all Nations,*

Nations, according to the commandment of the Lord, the Faithful began to seek loca munda, *clean places* (which he interprets by that which follows) *and removed from tumults and affairs of men of carnal converſation, therein to celebrate pure Prayers, and the holy Myſteries, and the comforts of mutual edification. For tho we read in the Goſpel, the Diſciples were with the Believers always in the Temple, or in ſome upper room, praiſing God, and giving themſelves to Faſting and Prayer; yet after the coming down of the Holy Ghoſt upon them. we read* Act 1. & 2d chap. *that they Celebrated Prayers and the Euchariſt* circa domos, *from houſe to houſe: and they met together not only within the City, in ſome houſe or other, but without alſo in ſecret places, as at* Philippi, Acts 16. 13. *But when the number of Believers was multiplied, they began to make their Houſes, Churches, as we often read in the Legends of the Saints. Oftentimes alſo declining the rage of Perſecutors, they had their meetings in Vaults under ground, and in places of Burial, and in Caves, and deſert Mountains and Valleys. Then as the Miracle of Chriſtian Religion profited more and more; and the Devil looſing ground, as Chriſt gained: New Oratories were built; nor ſo only, but alſo the Temples of their Gods and Idols, with the abominable Worſhip thereof, being thrown away and baniſhed, were changed into the Churches of God.*

It's true, that he diſlikes not praying towards the Eaſt, but gives reaſons for the congruity of it; yet upon conſideration of the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, that the Holy of Holies was Weſtward, and that *Solomon* in's Prayer at the Dedication thereof, turned his Face that way, he concludes, *His & aliis exemplis edocti, cognoſcimus, non erraſſe illos, vel errare, qui Templis vel noviter Deo conſtructis, vel ab Idolorum ſqualore mundatis, propter aliquam locorum opportunitatem, in diverſas plagas altaria ſtatuerunt; quia non eſt locus, ubi non ſit Deus. By theſe and other Examples, we learn that they who either in Temples newly built for God, or purged from the filthineſs of Idols, did according to the opportunity of places, ſet Altars towards different Coaſts, did nothing* erre, *ſeeing there is no place where God is not preſent.* And accordingly proceeds to ſhew, that in the Temple built by *Helena* at *Jeruſalem*, upon Chriſt's Sepulcher; and in the Pantheon at *Rome*, converted to Chriſtian uſe; as alſo, in St. *Peter's* Church there, Altars were Erected, not only towards the Eaſt, but alſo, other Quarters of the Heavens. And adds, *Hæc cum ſecundum voluntatem, vel neceſſitatem fuerint ita diſpoſita*

ſita, improbare non audemus. So that tho he approves rather, of praying towards the Eaſt; yet profeſſeth, *he dares not blame thoſe, who otherwiſe ordered the matter, and that not only in caſe of neceſſity, but of meer will and pleaſure.* Concluding thus, *Unusquiſque in ſuo ſenſu abundet, propè eſt Dominus omnibus, invocantibus eum in veritate. Let every one abound in his own ſenſe, the Lord is near to all that call upon him in Truth.* I muſt add to all theſe, the Example of the Church of *England*, in reading the Liturgy, Miniſters Prayers, and Peoples practice; and further ſhew, that tho *Mede* joins the poſition of Churches and Prayers; yet neither of theſe neceſſarily infer the other; but I have run out too far on this Argument already.

The ſecond is drawn from the Diſcipline of the Church, which required diſtinct and regular places in their Aſſemblies, for Penitents, Auditors, Catechumens and the Faithful; which argues, they had places accommodated for that purpoſe.

We had this Argument before, in the middle of the Third Century, where we anſwered the ſame; and therefore ſhall be briefer here.

Where I ſhall not inſiſt upon it, That diſtinctions might be made in private Houſes or Places; tho not ſo well or great as in publick Churches. Nor deny the authority of that obſcure Epiſtle; however called Canonical, of *Gregorius Neocæſarienſis*, which was a little before alledged for this Diſcipline, and alſo conſidered. But roundly anſwer, that no ſuch diſtinction of places can be proved in the days of the Apoſtles, or an hundred years after. It's therefore a ſtrange inference, that if there were ſuch different places, for the ſeveral ſorts of Church Members, in *Gregory*'s time; which was about 250 years after the Nativity of our bleſſed Saviour; that there were ſuch in the Apoſtles days, and ever ſince; as our Adverſaries would perſwade us. But they muſt have ſtronger reaſons than theſe, before they gain our aſſent. For who ſeeth not, that ſuch diſtinction of places is more fit for times of Peace than Perſecution (ſuch as were moſtly the firſt 300 years of Chriſtianity) wherein men muſt be content to do as they may, and can, ſeeing they cannot do as they deſire.

The Third Argument is drawn from the Example of the Synagogues and Proſeucha's of the *Jews*, whoſe Religion was as contrary to the Empires, as the Chriſtians, and yet in their diſperſion amongſt the Gentiles, had appropriate places for

the exercise thereof. Who can believe that such a Pattern should not invite the Christians to an imitation of the same, tho we should suppose there were no other reasons to induce them, but that of ordinary conveniency.

This Reason supposes the Christians might do, as the *Jews*, who built them Synagogues in those Cities where they resided; having a legal Tolleration for the exercise of their Religion; whereas the Laws of the Empire were against the Christians. Which makes me wonder such Learned Men, as *Fuller*, *Mede* and others, that could not but know so much; should produce this Plea for their Opinion. Just as if they should argue, The *Jews* in many *Popish* Countries, build and enjoy their Synagogues, whose Religion is more contrary to *Popery* than the *Protestants*; and therefore the *Protestants* should follow their Example, and build themselves Churches for their publick Worship. To which the answer is easie; that so they would if they had the like Tolleration. But to what purpose should they build up that which the Magistrates would throw down, and they should never enjoy, but instead thereof be more persecuted and punisht. Whence in several great Cities, where there are some *Protestants*, Ministers are sent them, which they call, *sub Cruce*, or *under the Cross of Persecution*, as the Learned Professor *Hornbeck* was in his younger years in *Collen*, (where I have seen the *Jews* Synagogue) and others I have known at *Ghent*, and elsewhere, *incognito*, or disguis'd, exercising their Office with great secresie, for their greater security. Not to mention the Persecutions the Christians were under in the first Ages of Christianity, when the *Jews* enjoyed the Liberty of their Religion: having spoken something thereof in the second *Section*, and shall more fully in the following.

Nor let any one stop me, with objecting the many Thousands of *Jews* under *Caligula* and *Claudius* Reigns, for their Tumults and Insurrections: or the Wars in the Reigns of *Nero* and *Vespasian*, wherein eleven hundred thousand perished, *Jerusalem* taken and demolished, with the Temple burnt. Nor after under *Ælius Adrianus*, about *A. D.* 130. who tho he built *Jerusalem*, calling it *Ælia* by his fore-name, (as he did *Adrianople* by his other) yet made miserable Havock of the *Jews* and their Country. For this was not by Persecution, but by open Wars with them for 6 Years together, which they

they brought upon themselves. The occasion is said to be, *quod mutilare genitalia vetarentur, arma corripuerant*; *that being forbidden Circumcision, they took up Arms.* Instead of humbly addressing for a revocation, they betake themselves to War-like Opposition; being also set agog by *Bencochab*, who gave himself out for their Messias. In which Wars this their false Messias was slain; and more Thousands of the *Jews*, than the number of the *Israelites* that came out of *Egypt*, as their Rabbins report; or as our Historians, five hundred thousand, and a thousand of their Villages burnt down to the Ground.

SECT. 10.

Having now Answered their Reasons, We shall proceed to lay down several Considerations for the corroborating our Assertion. Which amount not to a Demonstration, I confess, That there could be no publick Places erected, for the Exercise of the *Christian Religion*, in the two First Centuries; yet compared with our Adversaries Arguments, will render our Cause much more probable, and weigh down theirs so clearly, as to satisfie all unprejudiced Readers.

1. Let's consider the State and Condition of the World as to Religion, when our blessed Saviour, after his Resurrection, sent forth his Apostles to Preach the Gospel to all Nations. In which were two sorts of Men, *Jews* and *Gentiles*; of whom 'tis hard to say, whether were the more implacable Enemies to the *Christian Religion*, and the Professors thereof.

As for the *Jews*, what Calumnies and Tumults did they raise against the *Christians*, not only in *Judea*, but wheresoever they resided; accusing their Doctrine as Blasphemous, their Persons as Factious and Seditious, and setting up a new King instead of *Cæsar*. And where they had no power to Persecute them, they stirred up the Magistrates in the Empire to do it, as we find frequently in the *Acts of the Apostles*.

And as to the *Gentiles*, what Ignorance, Wickedness, and abominable Idolatries they lived in, Scripture hath abundantly declared. *God having in times past suffered πάντα τὰ ἔθνη all the Gentiles*, rather than as we Translate it, all Nations, to *walk in their own ways*, Acts 14. 16. For the *Jews* had the way of Salvation made known to them; but the *Gentiles* ways were in gross Idolatry, setting up to themselves multiplicity of Gods,

whom they worshipped and served; although some of the wiser sort of them held one Supream, whom they called *Jove*, contracted from *Jehova*, πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε the Father both of Men and Gods. And this their Idolatrous Worship and Religion was so ancient, even from Time immemorial, and so universal in all the Nations of the *Gentiles*; that none can imagine but the Gospel, which opposed and condemned this wherever it came, should have the utmost Opposition, and its Publishers and Professors Persecutions, rather than a Toleration or Permission to set up a Religion in publick, destructive of their own.

2. Consider the Power of the *Roman* Monarchy, which was then at the height; having Conquered the greatest part of the Western Nations, both in *Europe* and *Africa*, and Eastward as far as *Euphrates*, in which especially the Gospel was to be Preached, though it was carried also into the remoter Parts elsewhere, over which the *Roman* Eagle never stretcht her Wings. In the City of *Rome*, *Tacitus* Reports, *Hist. l.* 11. there were not fewer than 6944000. and what vast Nations were then subject to its Empire, is sufficiently known; and what numerous Armies they constantly kept up. All which Power was Unanimous for the defence of their Idols, and their Idolatrous Worship, against all Men and Means that would defame them, or tended to their Demolition.

3. Consider also, That at that time there was not only the greatest Power to oppose *Christianity*, but also the greatest intellectual Helps and Means, Learning being then in its full Meridian of Glory. They had subtle Philosophers for defending their Religion, and as good Arguments for its Verity, as *Bellarmine*, and the *Papists*, alledge for theirs, such as Antiquity, Universality, Extent, Succession of their Priests, Prosperity, and the like. They had Eloquent Orators to Plead their own, and Implead, *Tertullus* like, the *Christian Religion*; besides the vast multitude of Priests, and those imployed for the training them up in their Idolatrous Worship, whereby they became prejudiced to the utmost against the Gospel of Christ, especially considering the nature and tendency thereof, either as to the *Credenda* or *Agenda*, things to be Believed or Practised, injoyned therein.

For Sinners to be Saved by a Crucified Jesus, might well to the Carnal and Unbelieving *Jews* and *Gentiles* be a stumbling Block,

Block, and accounted Fooliſhneſs; as the Reſurrection of the Dead, and other Articles of our Faith, ſtrange Doctrines: And things ſo contrary to Fleſh and Blood, as Self-denial, Mortification, Suffering joyfully Perſecution, and even Death it ſelf for Chriſt's ſake and the Goſpel, might well be accounted hard Sayings not to be born, but rather derided and rejected, as indeed they were generally by the wiſe Men of the World.

Nor let any here object *Mahometiſm*, for that was ſet up when the Empire was broken to pieces under *Heraclius*, by the Irruption of the Barbarous Nations; and in *Arabia*, amongſt an ignorant People, where few *Chriſtians* were, and no Learning, but ready to embrace any Innovations, and receive any Impreſſions of Religion, eſpecially ſuch a Senſual one as the *Alcoran* holds forth; when there were neither Men of Knowledge and Parts to oppoſe it, nor Princes of Power to perſecute it, but worldly Power to ſet it up and ſupport it. So that 'tis leſs wonder that ſoon grew publick: Whereas it was quite otherwiſe with the Goſpel, which was neither ſet up, nor carried on, by Might and Power of Arms, but by the Spirit of the Lord accompanying it all along, where it was carried, to make it Efficacious.

4. Conſider how ſtrongly *Gentiliſm* was guarded by Laws. For all Nations, though they had ſeveral Idol Gods, and Worſhip, yet accounted their Religion to be of a Divine Original: As the *Romans* from the Goddeſs *Egeria*, and others from ſome God or Goddeſs they Worſhipped: and would never ſuffer their Gods to be diſhonoured, or their Rites of Worſhip, how Ridiculous ſoever, to be defamed by any amongſt them, though Foreigners they could not hinder, did, as the *Romans*, the *Jews* and *Egyptians* eſpecially. I ſhall not abuſe the *Reader*'s Patience, in citing Hiſtories and Poets for theſe things, they are ſo many, and ſo well known; nor how they always provided by their Laws, Security for their own, and Prohibition and Penalties againſt other Religions. The *Romans*, by the Laws of the 12 Tables, forbad

Nequis alios inducat Deos, ſed Patriam ſive Romanam Religionem ſequatur.

That

That none should introduce other Gods, but follow the Country's, or Roman *Religion, and that under severe Penalties.* Of which *Cicero*, l. 2. *de Legibus* largely. By vertue of which Laws alone, many *Christians* were extreamly punish'd by the Prætors, and Presidents of Provinces, and put to Death, without any Edicts from the Emperors; though where these were added to enforce their Execution, Persecution was much more fierce and cruel: And this appears plainly by *Pliny*'s Epistle to *Trajan*; who having Condemned and Executed many by the Laws of the Empire, deterr'd at length by the multitude of those that were to be punished, Consulted the Emperor what he should do in that case, the Emperors having power to Suspend Execution, though not to Abrogate the Laws, which *Senatus Populusq; & Principes Romani decreverant ut non sint Christiani: The* Roman *Senate, People and Princes had decreed,* as that *no Christians be tollerated.* Another early Law made by the Senate, mention'd by *Eusebius*, 5. 21. *Non debere demitti Christianos qui semel ad Tribunal venissent, nisi propositum mutent: That the Christians which once came to publick Tryal, should not be dismist, except they changed their Religion.*

5. Consider the Policy of the State, which was against Tollerating any diverse Religion amongst them, and much more a contrary to their own. As the *Christian*, which wholly changed the Face of the World, accounted their Deities Idols, and their Devotion gross Idolatry; which was therefore judged dangerous for raising Tumults and Commotions among the People, which might end in Civil Wars for Religion: So that they Unanimously concluded it best for the Publick Safety, to Extirpate *Christianity*, and the Professors thereof. Yea, so Jealous were they, that all Societies, or Conventions, were forbidden, as appears by 42. & 43. *Epist. Plinij, l.* 10. And much more of *Christians*, as *Ep.* 98. Acquaints *Trajan*, How the *Christians* forbore *post edictum meum, quo secundum mandata tua hetærias esse vetueram: After my Edict, whereby I forbad, according to your Command, all Conventions of Societies.*

This Consideration of State-Policy, hath been the great Argument and Engine in all Ages for Persecution; insomuch, that some Christian Writers of Politicks, upon this account, justifie the *Heathens*, and *Popish Inquisition*; though S. *James* calls this *Wisdom earthly, sensual, devilliſh*, quite contrary to that

that from above, which is, *first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easie to be intreated, full of mercy*, &c. And oh! that it had not prevail'd amongst *Protestants*, to the great Scandal of the *Prince of Peace*, and his peaceable Gospel, which they profess! It was far more tollerable in the *Gentiles*, who had only the Light of Nature for their Guide; as the *Romans*, who yet tollerated the Nations they Conquered, to retain their Religion, not only *Gentilism*, but *Judaism* also, both in *Judea*, and in their dispersion in the *Roman* Territories: the *Jews* having before submitted to the *Roman* Government, and become their Tributaries, when Subdued by *Pompey*. By reason whereof, the *Christians* coming from *Jerusalem*, and passing in the Empire, a while at the first for *Jews*, whose Synagogues they used then to frequent, passed undiscerned, without Persecution; 'till afterwards that they were discovered, and then both *Jews* and *Gentiles* became their implacable Enemies, those frequently stirring up these (as we read in the *Acts*) to Persecute them. For they both accounted them setters up of a strange God and Religion, in their worshipping Christ, whom they both took for a meer Man, whom their Ancestors had Crucified; and that the Gospel tended to overturn both their Religions, and ways of Worship; which will yet more evidently appear, by that which in the next place follows.

6. Consider the many and grievous false Accusations brought against the *Christians*, which greatly incensed all sorts of People against them. They were accused of *Atheism*, and all manner of Impiety, as killing and eating Children, Incest, and impure Mixtures, Magick, and every Evil almost that might render them odious, which may be read in the Primitive Fathers, *Greek* and *Latine*, in their Apologies for *Christianity*; summarily mentioned in *Spencer*'s *Annotations* on the First Book of *Origen*. So that the *Christians* for their Impiety, were accounted the Cause of all those publick Calamities that befel the Empire. If there was a Famine, Pestilence, &c. the People cryed out *Christianos ad Leones, cast the Christians to the Lions*, as *Tertul. Apol.* c. 40. *Cypr. Ep.* 75. and others. So when *Rome* was taken by *Alaricus*, it was imputed to the Anger of the Gods, for the contempt of their Religion; which occasioned S. *Austin* to write that excellent Book *de civitate Dei*, and *Orosius* his *Orchestra*, for the Refutation of their Heathenish Folly, which was so great, that they still thought to appease

peaſe the Anger of their Gods, with the Blood of the *Chriſtians*.

Nor were they leſs traduced for being Enemies to the State, and ſuch as turned the World upſide down; notwithſtanding all their peaceable Demeanour under the Civil Government; becauſe they would not Pray to their Idols (though they did to Almighty God) nor offer Sacrifices to them for the Proſperity thereof.

In like manner alſo were they Accuſed, for being Rebels to their Emperors; becauſe they refuſed to frequent their Solemn Feaſts and Spectacles for their Victories; nor would Swear, as others did, by their *Genius*; nor give them Divine Honours, by offering Sacrifices to them, together with their Idol Gods. For as *Julius Cæſar*, as *Suetonius* tells us in his Life, *c.* 76. *Decerni ſibi paſſus eſt, Templa, Aras, ſimulachra, juxta Deos: Suffered Temples, Altars and Images, to be Decreed for him near the Gods.* So his Heathen Succeſſors in the Empire continued the ſame, as may be ſeen in *Pliny*'s Epiſtle to *Trajan*. Hence they were called *Sacrilgi*, *Sacriligious*, and *Lawleſs*, becauſe this Worſhip of the Gods and *Cæſar*, was by Law Eſtabliſhed: Yea, the Enemies of Mankind, becauſe by their Contempt of the Gods, they brought Miſeries upon the World.

So that being accounted by the Heathens Enemies of their *Gods*, and *Religion*, their *State*, *Emperors*, *Laws*, *Manners*, and all *Mankind:* No wonder if they became the object of publick Hatred, according to that of *Tertul. l. Scorp. c.* 11. *Odio habemur ab omnibus hominibus nominis cauſa. We are hated of all Men for the Name of Chriſtians, and his, and* Athenagoras, *and* Juſtin, likewiſe in their Apologies, as our Saviour had foretold, *Matth.* 10. 22. So 24. 9. and *Luke* 21. 12.

And it had been happy for after Ages, ſince the World turn'd *Chriſtian*, if theſe Calumnies had not been uſed, to repreſent the beſt ſort of Men, as Enemies to Princes and States, who could not in Conſcience comply to worſhip the Image they ſet up. How have not only *Papiſts* under ſuch Pretexts, all along Perſecuted all that would not ſubmit to their impious Impoſitions, but even *Proteſtants* alſo, frequently for ſmall Matters, all ſuch as refuſed to Dance after the Fidle of the Times.

7. Let us further conſider the Temporal Intereſt of moſt, which carries all before it, with thoſe that regard not their

Spiritual

Spiritual and Eternal: The whole World turning continually upon the Hinge of Self-Intereſt. And herein the vaſt number of thoſe ingaged thereby againſt the Chriſtians; ſome for preſerving the Dignities and Revenues they had, and others for Augmenting them.

Of the former ſort were the ſeveral Religious Orders of Prieſts, or Flamines, and Augurs or Prognoſticators, with the whole Rabble that depended on them. Which muſt needs be many, conſidering the multitude of Places and People, as alſo of Idols and Temples they were to ſerve, by performing their Religious Functions in Sacrifices, Luſtrations and Supplications. All which had great Credit, as in all Religions ſuch have, eſpecially amongſt an Ignorant and Superſtitious People. And underſtood very well, that Chriſtianity, would ruine at once all their Offices, Honours, and Profit. Knowing that thereby their Gods would be derided, their Worſhip neglected, their Oracles remaining contemned, and proved often falſe; many of them being already ſilenced; which the learned *Plutarch* both confeſt and wondred at in's Book *de defectu Oraculorum*, amongſt his Works, and with *Camararius*'s Notes alone. Which Conſideration ſtopt two of the Heathen Emperours, which had moſt kindneſs for Chriſt, if we may believe *Lampridius* in the Life of *Alexander Severus*, who writes thus. *Chriſto* (Alexander) *Templum facere voluit, eumque inter Deos recipere. Quod et* Adrianus *cogitaſſe fertur, qui Templa in omnibus Civitatibus ſine ſimulachris juſſerat fieri: Quæ hodie idcirco, quia non habent numina, dicuntur* Adriani, *quæ ille ad hoc paraſſe dicebatur: Sed prohibitus eſt ab iis, qui conſulentes ſacra, repererant omnes Chriſtianos futuros, ſi id optata eveniſſet, & Templa Reliqua deſerenda.* Alexander Severus *would have made a Temple for Chriſt, and receive him amongſt the Gods. Which* Adrian, *alſo is ſaid to have determined, who had commanded Temples to be made in all Cities without Images; which therefore ſtill, becauſe they have no Gods, are called* Adrian's; *which He was ſaid to have prepared for this; but was prohibited by thoſe, who conſulting the Oracles, found all would turn Chriſtians, if that had happened well, and all other Temples would be forſaken.*

Of the latter Sort, that were for augmenting their Eſtates, were eſpecially the Magiſtrates, both Supream and Subordinate. For knowing they might gain, by the Execution of the Laws: Thoſe eſpecially that were Superſtitious, Covetous, and

Cruel, were thereby induced to fly upon the Spoil, by confiscating the Estates of Christians, *who indured a great fight of Afflictions; were made a gazing Stock both by Reproaches and Afflictions; and were Companions of them that were so used, and took joyfully the spoiling of their Goods*, Heb. 10. 32, 33, 34. and elsewhere their Sufferings are set forth, comprizing their Losses: Yea, even *Felix* the Governour hoped to have got Mony from poor *Paul* for his Freedom; and communed with him oftner for this End, thinking belike, that his Friends would contribute thereto, *Acts* 24. 26. So that Temporal Interest ingaged all Officers, Sacred and Civil, to prevent and suppress Christianity, and the Professors thereof.

8. To all the former Considerations, which suggest sufficient Reasons for the Christians to keep themselves as private as possible, we may add several other Particulars.

As the vast Multitude of their Enemies, whose extream prejudice against Christianity, and inveterate hatred of the Christians, stirr'd them up frequently to raise Popular Tumults against their Persons, Families, and Societies; as we read in the *Acts of the Apostles*, and other *Authors*.

And if the People were suppress't by the Magistrates from exorbitant Violence, they had always Liberty to accuse them, and bring them to Tryal. And such was their Malice and Rage, that sometimes they hurried them by Violence before their Rulers; and sometimes exhibited Multitudes in the same Libel, or Accusation. Then were they strictly examined, and put to purge themselves upon Oath. And if they denied, were commanded, for further Proof thereof, not only to Worship and Sacrifice to the Idol Gods and Emperours, but also to curse Christ. And if they confest, were certainly condemned to Punishment, which was of several kinds, most usually Death. Altho no other Crime was alledged or proved then their Christianity. Their Christian Constancy, termed inflexible obstinacy, was judged sufficient ground for their Condemnation. Of which the Primitive Fathers Apologies, and *Pliny*'s Epistle to *Trajan*, inform us sufficiently.

And if they were brought to a Publick Tryal, where less Tumultuousness, and more legal Proceedings were used: Yet how little Hopes they could have, of escaping the utmost Severities of the Laws against them, may be easily imagined, seeing all that Tryed them, as well as those that Accused them,

were

were their implacable Enemies. For when an Accuſation was brought in, the Pretor in *Rome*, and the Proconſul or Supream Governour in the Provinces, having appointed the Time of Tryal, then came and ſate on the Tribunal, and the Judges choſen by Lot (more or fewer, according to the Quality of the Cauſe) ſate on Benches. And all the Favour the Accuſed had, was to Object againſt thoſe he thought good, (as we are wont in *England* of the Juries) which the Accuſer had likewiſe Liberty to do; and the number of thoſe rejected being again ſupplied by Lot, the Cauſe was pleaded, and the Judges gave Sentence, by Capital Letters in Tables, A. *abſolvebat*, *abſolved.* C. *condemnabat*, *condemned.* N. L. *non liquet*, *Its not manifeſt.* As our Juries pronounce, *Guilty*, or *Not Guilty*, or *Ignoramus.* I know the manner of the *Grecians* paſſing Sentence was otherwiſe, by caſting ſmall ſtones into an Urne, the White and whole ſignifying Abſolution, the Black and Holed Condemnation. But this only by the by.

Having thus laid down ſo many Conſiderations, to ſupport our Aſſertion; I ſubmit them to the Judgment of all impartial Readers, if they do not preponderate our Opponents Reaſons for theirs; and proceed in the laſt Place, to produce ſeveral Teſtimonies, for Defence of the Truth we have laid down, and undertaken to prove.

SECT. II.

We come now to alledge ſeveral Teſtimonies to make good our Poſition; which we ſhall take from ſuch Authentick Authors, as are beyond all Exceptions; and not ſuch ſpurious ones, as ſeveral that have been brought againſt us.

And for the more diſtinct proceeding herein; we ſhall reduce them to theſe three General Heads.

1. Such as ſpeak of the Perſecution of the Primitive Churches; whereby any one may judge, whether they were in a Condition ſuitable to the injoyment of certain appropriate Places, call them Oratories, Churches, or as ſome of our Opponents falſly Temples (for that Name came not in for them, till the fourth Century) if you pleaſe; much leſs to build ſuch publickly in the firſt Ages, for their conſtant worſhipping in.

2. Such as declare, that for two hundred Years at leaſt they had no ſuch, as our Adverſaries avouch.

3. What kind of Places they then assembled in: Which were the most Private they could find or contrive for their Security.

As to the first of these, concerning the Persecution of the Primitive Church, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles; we have spoken something already in the second Section; and shall therefore proceed to that part of *Nero*'s Reign, that immediately Succeeds. For St. *Paul*'s coming to *Rome*, about the fifth of that Emperour, and Imprisonment there for the space of two Years, concludes the *Acts*. There he found a flourishing Church, as appears by *c.* 1. *v.* 8. of that admirable Epistle he had Written to them, between two and three Years before. Whether Founded by those Strangers of *Rome* that were at *Jerusalem* in the Day of Pentecost, *Acts* 2. 10. Or by those mentioned in the 16. *Chapter* of his Epistle, or joyntly by them all, I determine not: But that it was not by *Peter*, who had not as yet been there, is apparent by the Series of History. During his Imprisonment, he wrote several of his excellent Epistles, as that to the *Galatians* (a People inhabiting *Tanium pessinunt*, and *Ancyra* in *Asia*) the *Ephesians*, *Philippians*, *Colossians*, *Philemon*, and as most think, even those that were last, as that to the *Hebrews*, and those to *Timothy*. Tho' Dr. *Cave* and others Judge, the first to *Timothy* was written in's return to *Rome*, and the second in the Year following. For both, some Places of Scripture, and many Ancient Fathers testifie, that being releas'd after two Years by *Nero*, he went and Preached the Gospel, in the *East*, *Italy*, *France*, and *Spain* for about four Years, and being apprehended and brought again to *Rome*, was there Beheaded. For *Nero* now inraged at the increase of the number of Christians, and the decrease of the Worshippers of the Idol Gods, made that bloody Decree, *Quisquis Christianum se confitetur, tanquam generis humani convictus hostis, sine ulteriore sui defensione, capite Plectitor. Whosoever confesseth himself to be a Christian, shall as thereby a convicted Enemy of Mankind, without any further Defence of himself, loose his Head.* And *Orosius* l. 7. *c.* 7. *Primus* (Nero) *Romæ Christianos supplicis & mortibus affecit; ac per omnes Provincias pari Persecutione excruciari imperavit; ipsumque nomen extirpari conatus*, &c. *Nero was the first at* Rome, *that punished the Christians, and put them to Death; and commanded that through all the Provinces, they should be tormented with like Persecution; and endeavoured to extirpate the very Name of Christians.* Where Note, that tho' all Authors

Authors generally make him the first Persecutor of the Christians, it must either be understood, as first of the Emperors; or the first general Persecution, after the Constitution of Churches amongst the *Gentiles*, which is usually reckoned from our Saviours Ascension, the Time of twenty five Years to *Nero*. For that both particular Persons, and the Church at *Jerusalem*, were persecuted before *Nero*'s Time, is manifest in the Acts of the Blessed Apostles.

There is a Passage in *Tacitus* Annals, *l.* 15. c. 44. transcribed by *Sulpicius Severus*, l. 2. *Hist.* very remarkable, for Congruity with Scripture, and clearing some Places therein. Which I shall therefore, tho' somewhat large, relate, and improve.

Having set forth the burning of *Rome*, attributed to *Nero*, *Abolendo rumori subdidit reos, & quæsitissimis pœnis affecit, quos per flagitia invisos, vulgus Christianos appellabat. Auctor nominis ejus Christus, qui* Tiberio *Imperitante per Proconsulem* Pontium Pilatum *supplicio affectus erat. Repressaque in Præsens exitiabilis Superstitio, rursus erumpebat, non modo per* Judæam, *originem ejus mali, sed per urbem etiam, quo cuncta undique atrocia aut pudenda confluunt, celebranturque. Igitur primo correpti, qui fatebantur, deinde judicio eorum multitudo ingens, haud perinde in crimine incendii, quam odio humani generis convicti sunt. Et pereuntibus addita ludibria, ut ferarum tergis contecti, leniatu canum interirent, aut crucibus affixi, aut flamandi, atque ubi defecisset dies; in usum nocturni luminis uterentur. Hortos sui ei spectaculo* Nero *obtulerat.* Nero *to extinguish the Rumor of his burning the City, falsly accused, and exquisitely tormented those, odious for their wickedness, which the common People called Christians. The Author of that Name is Christ, who in the Reign of* Tiberius, *was executed by his Proconsul* Pontius Pilate. *And this Pestilent Superstition having been repressed for a Time, broke out again, not only in* Judea, *the Original of that evil, but also in the City of* Rome, *whither all heinous and shameful things from all parts flow together, and are had in Estimation. First therefore they were apprehended, who confessed; then a great multitude of them being discovered were convicted in Judgment, not so much for the crime of burning the City, as the hatred of Mankind. And mockeries added to their Deaths, they were covered with the Skins of wild Beasts, that they might be torn in Pieces by Dogs, or Crucified, or Burnt, and when the Day was spent, they were used for Lights in the Night.* Nero *had offered his Gardens for this Spectacle.*

Here

Here we have the *Heathens* Opinion of Chriſtianity and Chriſtians: An Atteſtation to that great Article of our Faith, *Chriſts Suffering under* Pontius Pilate: And the Sufferings of his Servants (for which I alledge the Place eſpecially) Theſe cauſed that Defection of many, the Hiſtorian briefly touches in ſaying, this *Pernicious Superſtition* (meaning Chriſtianity) *was for a Time repreſt.* That is, by thoſe former Perſecutions, we have frequently mentioned in *Paul*'s Epiſtles (and alſo thoſe of *James* and *Peter.*) Whereby ſome forſook the Chriſtian Aſſemblies, others apoſtatized from the Faith of Chriſt, againſt which the Apoſtle warns the reſt, *Hebrews*, 10. 23. to the end of the Chapter. Others mixt Chriſtianity with *Judaiſm* (which was tollerated) leſt they *ſhould ſuffer Perſecution for the Croſs of Chriſt*, Gal. 6. 12. Altho thoſe Sanguinary Laws and Bloody Perſecutions that followed, had not as yet fallen on them, as *Heb.* 12. 4. ſhews, where the Apoſtle ſaith, *Ye have not yet reſiſted unto Blood.* For theſe were begun by *Nero*, about the ſeventh or eighth Year of his Reign. I ſuppoſe, before the Conflagration at *Rome* (uſually reckoned the tenth) but for theſe, ſee the ſeveral Notes on *c.* 2. of *Lactantius*, *de mortibus Perſecutorum. Domitian* about thirteen Years after *Nero* is made Emperor, who in Cruelty ſurpaſt him: Taking Pleaſure in beholding thoſe in Torments, nor ſparing ſome of his neareſt Relations.

Confirmatiſſimam toto orbe Chriſti Eccleſiam, datis ubique crudeliſſimæ Perſecutionis Edictis, convellere auſus eſt univerſali Perſecutione. Saith *Oroſius* l. 7. *c.* 7. That is, *He adventured to pluck up by the Roots the Church of Chriſt, that was moſt firmly ſettled in the whole World, by univerſal Perſecution, Edicts for moſt cruel Perſecutions every where being given out by him.* So that how privately ſoever the Chriſtians kept their Aſſemblies, moſt of their Paſtors were forced to fly, according to the Verſe of that Time.

Urbibus antiqui Patres fugêre relictis.

The ancient Fathers leaving the Cities fled.

Trajan about a Year and four Months after *Domitian*, follows in the Empire, under whom the Third General Perſecution is reckoned. For that many Chriſtians ſuffer'd under him,

by

by his Governours executing the Laws againſt them is manifeſt. For, *Suidas* ſaith, *Tyberianus* the Preſident of *Syria* writ him Word, *Se non eſſe parem Chriſtianis occidendis, eo quod ultro illi ſe neci offerrent. That he was not able, or ſufficient for killing the Chriſtians, becauſe of their own Accord, they offered themſelves to Death.* And *Pliny* his Proconſul in *Bithynia*, after he had put many to Death, affrighted with their Multitude, conſulted the Emperor what was to be done with them, in that excellent Epiſtle to *Trajan*, l. 10. *Epiſt.* 98. (mentioned by *Tertul.* in *Apol.* *Euſebius* and others) which I ſhall not tranſcribe, being in moſt Mens hands. Only let me obſerve, that ſo ſevere was the Perſecution, that many for fear, denied they were Chriſtians, tho' they had been they confeſt, but had forſaken it, ſome of them *ante plures Annos* many Years before; and that after he had forbidden their Societies, according to the Emperors command, they had forborn them; and having faithfully declared, their Manner of Worſhip, and Innocency of Life; yet *Trajan* anſwers him, They ſhould not be ſought after, but Connived at, except they were Accuſed and Convicted, and then if they perſiſted, they ſhould be puniſhed. *Conquirendi non ſunt: Si deferantur, & arguantur, puniendi ſunt*, by which occaſion, ſaith *Euſebius*, l. 3. *Hiſt. c.* 33. *Plurimi ex fidelibus multiplicis Martyrii certamen ſubjerunt. Many of the Chriſtian ſuffered manifold Martyrdom.* And thus I have gone through the firſt Age, and the Times of all the Apoſtles; St. *John* who out-lived all the reſt, till the third Year of *Trajan* (as *Irænens* and *Hierom* affirm) and dyed 100. or more Years of old Age. From what's ſaid, let any impartial Man judge, If in the Apoſtles Times as well as ever ſince, the Chriſtians had ſuch Places for Worſhip, as our Adverſaries contend for.

I deſign not a Hiſtory, and therefore ſhall not proceed to the General Perſecutions that follows in the Second and Third Century, which together with the former, are generally counted Ten (tho' differently reckoned) that they may anſwer the Ten Plagues of *Egypt*, but by ſome Twelve in Number. In regard 'tis needleſs; ſo many having related them at large, *Euſebius* eſpecially, at whoſe Torch moſt after him Light their Candles. And in our own Language, *Fox* in the beginning of his Martyrology. I ſhall only requeſt, the conſidering the Hiſtory of thoſe general Perſecutions in the *Roman* Empire; and it will appear, that tho' they were not continual, yet the Chriſtians

ſtians in the firſt Ages had not any long time of Repoſe, tho' ſome lucid Intervals ſometimes, when the Affairs of the Empire were diſturbed and turbulent, (as is uſual we know by Modern Examples) eſpecially from *Commodus* to *Severus*, and from *Severus* to *Decius*. So that it was the wonderful Work of God, and Power of his Grace, that carried on the Work of the Goſpel, againſt all Oppoſition; and let the World ſee how vain the Attempts of Men were, againſt what Gods Hand and Counſel determined before ſhould come to paſs. As *Tertul.* in *c.* 5. *Apolog. Cruciate, torquete, damnate, atterite nos---. Plures efficimur quoties metimur à vobis. Semen eſt Sanguis Chriſtianorum, Torment, torture, condemn, break us to Pieces. The oftner we are Mowen down by you, the more we are made. The Blood of Chriſtians, is the Seed of the Church.* And becauſe ſome pretend, the good Nature of ſome of the Emperors, and their peaceable Reigns: It is not denied, that ſome were far better, comparatively than others, as *Nerva*, *Domitians* Succeſſor, who recalled thoſe he had Baniſhed, as *John* the Evangeliſt, with many others, and acquitted the Chriſtians from the Rigour of the Laws. But Alas! this was but a ſhort Breathing Time, he having Reigned but four Months and nine Days above a Year; ſo that it's ſcarce accounted; nor ſome that were longer, no nor any, as the effect of their Clemency, but Reaſon of State, and their being imbarreſt in other Affairs, or imbroiled in Wars. For this we have *Theodoret*'s evident Teſtimony, *Hiſt. l.* 1. *c.* 38. *Quotquot Imperatores ante* Conſtantinum M. *regnarunt, contra Veritatis Profeſſores inſana rabie furere non deſierunt. All the Emperors that Reigned before* Conſtantine *the Great, ceaſed not with mad Fury to Rage againſt the Profeſſors of the Truth.* So that we may conclude, there was no truſting to their Friendſhip, or Favour, further than their Temporal Intereſt, and their own Safety, and Security of the Government were concerned. And therefore ſmall Opportunity or Incouragement for Chriſtians injoying any publick Places for Worſhip conſtantly, much leſs for Building any ſuch.

SECT. 12.

Here occurs an Objection, made againſt the Greatneſs and Cruelty of theſe Perſecutions, by Reaſon of the Paucity of the Martyrs comparatively, with the common Opinion of their

their great Multitudes. Which is especially managed, by my old Friend, the Learned Mr. *Dodwel*, in's XI. Dissertation on *Cyprian*.

But in this he seems not only singular, but to found his Opinion upon a false Foundation; that because we find not so many mention'd in Antiquity, therefore they were fewer, than we commonly account them. For some Presidents of Provinces prohibited the reserving the Records of the Martyrs Tryals: And most of those that were recorded, and remained to the Times of Christian Emperors; afterwards by the Irruption of the barbarous Nations into the Empire, were lost. So that we have little more than what *Eusebius* had gather'd up, and Published, in's Ecclesiastical History, and more particularly in two Books of the Martyrs; the former a Collection of the Ancient Martyrs, which is lost. The latter of those of *Palastine* that had suffered in his Time. Besides, 'tis observable, that great numbers were slain, both by the Magistrates and People without any formal Process of Law, and so could not be taken Notice of. *Propter Confessionem torquetis. Causa non judicata supplicia infertis*, saith *Justin* in's *Apology*, *Upon our Confession you Torment us. No Judgment being given of the Cause, you punish us.* And to the same Purpose, *Tertul.* in *Apologet.* c. 37. The Governours of Cities and Provinces, being stir'd up by the Priests and People; made no great difficulty many Times, to Sacrifice them to the Popular Fury. For Things being carried often by Tumults, many were slain *quasi jure Belli*, as if it were in War, sometimes 10, 20, 30, 60, and sometimes 100, Men and Women with their little ones were Massacred in a Day, as *Eusebius* tells us, *l.* 3. *c.* 33. and *l.* 4. *c.* 8. and *l.* 8. *c.* 9. of his History.

Insomuch that the Emperors were forced to give Orders for restraining them, as *Hadrian Ne quis posthac sine objecto criminis & legitima accusatione condemnaretur. Let none hereafter be condemned without setting forth the Crime, and a legal Accusation.* Nor are we to reckon the Persecutions, or number of Martyrs, by the Emperors Edicts; for 'tis evident, the *Roman* Rulers and Governors, waited not for any such Decrees, but when any were Accused, they Tryed, Condemn'd and Executed them, according to the Laws made

 against

against them. This is evident by *Pliny*'s Proceeding, when he was Proconsul in *Pontus* and *Bithynia*, without *Trajans* Order. Yea, under some of the Emperors that more favour'd the Christians, as *Alexander Severus*, through his Mother *Mammea*'s Perswasions, though they emitted no Edicts for prohibiting their Persecution, many Martyrs suffered in their Reigns.

But this Question relating to Matter of Fact, cannot be determined otherwise, than by having recourse to the Historians and Ancient Fathers that have written of those Times. Which whosoever peruseth, may soon see that vast Army of glorious Martyrs, which may astonish him, and fill him with Admiration of their Christian Fortitude, under such direful Sufferings as they underwent.

It would be endless to recite their Sayings, for the great number of Martyrs. In the Third General Persecution there were innumerable Martyrs. The *Menologia Græcorum* say, *Decem millia Christianorum in Monte* Ararat *cruci suffixa sub* Trajano. *That there were ten Thousand Christians Crucified under the Reign of* Trajan *in the Mountain of* Ararat. In the Fourth under *Adrian*, *Passim Martyrum millena*, *there were frequently Thousands of Martyrs.* And so in the following, many thousands in the general, are reckon'd by several Authors. *Chytræus* in's *Historical Kalender*, reports from the fore-mention'd *Menology*, 28 Decembris *bis decem millia Martyrum in* Nicomedia *ustorum*, *That on the* 28*th of* December *Twenty Thousand were burnt in* Nicomedia. And if so many on one Day, what numbers in so many Years? And if so many in one Place, how great must the number be in all Places? But we must not stay upon Particulars. *Euseb.* l. 5. saith under the Emperor *Antoninus*, *Innumerabiles prope Martyres per universum orbem enituisse*; *That Martyrs almost ignumerable, were famous throughout the World.* And if in the Fifth Persecution (as that's usually reckon'd) alone, were so many, what were there in all the Ten or Twelve? *Prudentius Hymno* xi. l. *de Coronis*, saith, *Innumeros Martyres* Romæ *ignotos fuisse*; *That there were innumerable unknown Martyrs at* Rome; and if at *Rome* alone, what in the whole Empire?

And of them all *Cyprian* saith, *l. de Exhort. ad Martyr. Non posse numerari Martyres Christianos Novi Testamenti*; *That*

That the Christian Martyrs of the New Testament cannot be numbred. And St. *Augustin* often in's Sermons *de Temp.* mentions the *millia Martyrum, Thousands of Martyrs:* And Tract. 113. in *Joh. innumerabiles, innumerable.*

I shall only further recite what *Fox, l.* 1. *p.* 44. saith from an Ancient Author, *Hierom* or *Heliodorus*, where he makes this Calculation. *Nullus esset Dies, qui non ultra quinque millium numerum Martyrum, reperiri posset ascriptus, excepto die Calendarum* Januarii, *i. e. There is no Day in the whole Year, unto which more than the number of five Thousand Martyrs cannot be ascribed, except only the first of* January. Which by Computation amounts to a Million and Eight Hundred Twenty five Thousand.

To animadvert on *Dodwels* Dissertation, is not necessary; in regard the Considerations laid down in the Tenth *Section*, with what is here added, I suppose sufficient. If any desire further Satisfaction, I must refer them to such Authors, as have industriously answered him. As *Monsr. Jaquelot*, in *French*, Dissertation, 4. *c.* 5. in the general. *Pagius* in *Critica Baroniana*, frequently in several Places. *Mabellonius in Itinere* Italico. And the Notes of several on *Lactantius de mortibus Persecutorum.* But especially, *Theodor. Ruinartius in Præfatione ad acta Martyrum*, most particularly.

To conclude this Discourse of the Primitive Persecutions, I shall likewise refer the Reader to such as have more largely treated thereof, besides those formerly mention'd. *Lactantius de mortibus Persecutorum cum notis variorum.* Ultrajecti, 1693. 8*vo.* *Meisnerus de Persecutionibus & Martyriis Christianorum veterum.* Witteb. 1654. 4*to.* *Gerhardi Vossii Commentarius in Epist. Plinii & edicta*, Cæs. R. *Adversus Christianos*, Amsterd. 1654. *Christ. Cortholtius de Persecutionibus Ecclesiæ Primitivæ sub Impp. Ethnicis, deque veterum Christianorum Cruciatibus.* Jenæ. 1660. 8*vo.* A Table of whose several sorts of Torments, may also be seen in *Fox*'s Martyrology.

SECT. 13.

We shall now proceed, to confirm our Opinion, by producing undeniable Testimonies, from approved Ancient Authors, such especially as writ Apologies for the *Christians*

against the *Gentiles*. Wherein they plead for those of former Ages, as well as their own; and in all places, as well as where they lived; though especially where their Enemies endeavoured to defame their Holy Profession.

1. *Minutius Felix*, who flourished as *Dodwel* thinks about the end of *M. Antoninus*'s Reign; but *Bellarmine*, under *Alex. Severus*, or about *A. D.* 206. And *Baldwin* yet later. However *Cecilius* the *Heathen* Objects, *Cur occultare & abscondere, quicquid illud colunt, magnopere nituntur? Cum honesta semper publico gaudeant, scelera secreta sint? Cur nullas aras habent, Templa nulla, nulla nota simulachra? Why the Christians greatly endeavour to keep secret and hide, that they Worship: Seeing honest Things may rejoice to be Publick, but wicked Things would be kept secret? Why they have no Altars, no Temples, nor known Images?* To which *Octavius* the Christian replies, by way of Concession, think ye that we hide that we Worship, if we have no Temples or Altars? What Image shall I make of God, since Man is his Image? What Temple shall I build for him, seeing the whole World made by him cannot contain him? Concluding it better, He be set up in our Minds and Hallowed in our Hearts.

2. *Origen*, who flourished by *Bellarmin's* account, about the Year 226. in his excellent Book against *Celsus*, the *Epicurean* Philosopher. Which he wrote at above sixty Years of Age, as *Euseb.* saith *l.* 6. *c.* 36. Therefore *A. D.* 245. having been born, 185. Wherein *Celsus* Objects in the end of *l.* 7. That the Christians οὐκ ἀνέχονται νεὼς ὁρῶντες, καὶ βωμοὺς, καὶ ἀγάλματα, could not indure to see the Temples, Altars, and Statues, and *l.* 8. p. 389, 390, and 391. of the *Cambridge* Edition, objects the same. To which *Origen* replies, That the Christians had for Altars spiritual Minds, and Prayers out of a pure Conscience for Incense. For Statues, the Image of God their Maker; and Temples agreeable to these; Holy Bodies, and the most excellent Temple of all, the Body of Christ, *John* 2. 19, 22. 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. *Isa.* 54. 11, 12. Not regarding liveless and sensless Temples, which sensless Men admire: Because taught to shun those counterfeit Religious, which make all those impious, that depart from the Religion of Jesus Christ, *who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.* By which some might think, *Origen* thought it unlawful to Wor-

Worship God in a Temple, as when He saith ἐκτρεπόμεθα τοῦ πάσης ζωῆς χορηγοῦ ἀψύχους καὶ νεκρῶς οἰκοδομεῖν νεώς. We avoid to Build liveless and dead Temples to him that is the bestower of all Life. But *Origen* hath no such meaning, as the Series of his Discourse shews: But that wheresoever Righteous Persons are found, that offer up Vows and Prayers to God from a pure Mind and Conscience, there God is worshipped after the best Manner, whether within a Temple, or without, elsewhere. And *Lil. Giraldus* in's Hist. *Deorum Syntagm.* 1. Commends this as a most acute Discourse in *Origen.* For, whereas the *Pagans* thought they performed a great piece of Service and Worship to God, by building Temples to him: This *Origen* opposeth, because a Temple is a sensless or a liveless Thing, and Contributes nothing to the pleasing of God in his Worship. Our Saviour and his Apostles, having by Word and Prayers, worshipped God as acceptably often in the open Air, as in the Temple of *Jerusalem.* So that hitherto the Christians had no Publick Places of Worship, but only in Private, may be rationally concluded.

3. *Arnobius*, who flourished by *Bellarmin's* account about *A. D.* 285. or as other later, brings in the *Gentiles* objecting against the Christians as the greatest Crime, that they had no Temples, Altars, nor Images; and answers, not by denial, but granting what they said; and for Temples, *In cujus rei necessitatem, aut dicitis esse constructa, aut esse rursus ædificanda censetis? What Necessity think you doth urge Men to build them, or after they are pulled down, to repair and restore them?* See his Reasons for the Christians forbearing to build them Temples, *l.* 6. He shews that Temples were not necessary, though convenient for their Religion. Therefore when they had Liberty, they built them Oratories, in the Third Century, which were now demolished by *Dioclesian.* For the Christians in all Times, and Places of the Empire, understood very well, that it was in the Emperors Power to pull down, whatsoever they Built, whensoever they pleased. And therefore if their Religion depended on Temples or Structures (as the Religion of the *Heathens* did, who as *Lactant.* saith *l.* 5. *c.* 19. found it all there, and left it there) they had been in an ill Case. If they have but a Private House, or

Room,

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Room, as our Saviour when he instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood, or the Disciples met in at *Troas*, their Service is as acceptable to God, as if performed in a Temple as glorious as *Solomons*. And this is the meaning of *Arnobius*, when he saith, *Neque ædes sacras ad venerationis Officia extruamus*, *They did not build Temples, to perform Offices of Worship*. For that God is equally served, honoured, and worshipped, as well without Temples as in them: Which *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Eusebius*, *Athanasius*, &c. have often asserted and proved.

4. *Lactantius*, *Arnobius*'s Schollar, Condemns the *Gentiles* for their Temples, Altars, and Images. *Quid sibi Templa, quid aræ volunt? Quid denique ipsa simulachra?* What means your Temples, Altars, and Images? In his *Instit. l. 6. c. 25. Non Templa illi congestis in altitudinem saxis extruenda sunt: In suo cuique consecrandus est pectore.* Temples are not to be built to God, of Stones raised on heighth, every one ought to Consecrate him in his own Breast. So again, *Si Deus non videtur, ergo his rebus coli debet quæ non videntur.* If God be Invisible, He is to be Worshipped with such Things as cannot be seen.

From these Ancients, it appears, the Primitive Christians held it as a Thing indifferent, as to the acceptableness of their Worship to God, whether they performed it in Temples, or without: And that Gods Worship being meerly of a spiritual Nature, the Place though never so magnificent and glorious, contributed nothing thereto: Which was directly opposite to the Opinion the *Heathen* had of Temples. And Secondly, The *Gentiles* Objections against Christians, shews that they had no Temples in the Days of *Minutius Felix*, and *Origen*.

For we deny not, that there were Churches or Houses of Divine Worship in *Arnobius* or *Lactantius*'s Time, who lived in the end of the Third or beginning of the Fourth Century. For they both acknowledge them, though but in some Places (it being improbable that Christians in all Places had them) *Lactan. l.* 4. mentions a Conventicle pull'd down, and *l.* 5. *c.* 21. Of one burnt in *Phrygia* with all the People therein. and *l.* 5. *c.* 2. Of a *Temple of God* demolished. For about his Time, in the Fourth Century, begun the Christians to

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use the Word *Temple*, for the Place of Christian Assemblies: Which formerly, to distinguish them from the *Gentiles* Temples they called, *Oratories*, *Assemblies*, *Congregations*, *Collects* or gatherings together, *Churches*, and sometimes also *Stations*; as *Bellarmin*, and *Vedelius*, formerly mention'd; and *Bauldrus* in's Notes on *Lactantius*, *de mortibus Persecutorum*, and *Spanhem* have shewn.

Nor say we, that *Lactantius* taxed the *Heathens* barely for their Buildings; but for their Error, in thinking, God was better served in Temples than without: And that the more glorious they were, their Service was more grateful to God. Whereas the Christian Religion, *tota in animo colentis est*, is all in the mind of the Worshipper. And this appears all along in his Book, *l.* 2. *c.* 6. *l.* 5. *c.* 19. and *l.* 6. *c.* 1. and 25.

Also *Chrysostom*, Homil. 36. on 1 *Corinth.* saith, That in the Apostle's Days, Houses were Churches, meaning Private Houses no doubt. And *Isidore Pelusiota* his Schollar is very plain and positive, *l.* 2. *Epist.* 246. That in the Time of the Apostles, when the Church abounded with the Graces of the Spirit, and Holiness of Life, there were no Temples, though ours now are adorned more than is meet. And having distinguished between ἐκκλησία and ἐκκλησιαστήριον, the Church, and the Place, as θυσία, and θυσιαστήριον, the Sacrifice and Altar, βάλη, and βαλευτήριον, the Councel, and Place of their Convention; concludes that in the Apostle's Times ἐκκλησιαστήρια, οὐκ ἦν, there were no Artificial Churches.

These with other of the Ancients, are followed by many of the Learned in after Ages. *Gerhard* the Glory of the *Lutherans* for Learning, *c.* 2. §. 9. *de Ecclesia*, saith, *Ex Actis Apostolicis, & Scriptoribus vetustioribus constat, quod Christiani Apostolorum tempore nondum habuerunt Publica Templa, sed in Privatis Domibus convenerunt.* That 'tis manifest from the Acts of the Apostles, and Ancient Writers, that the Christians had no Publick Temples in the Apostles Time, but met in Private Houses.

The Learned Jesuit *Justinian*, in's excellent Comments on the Epistles on 1 *Cor.* 11. 18. saith, The Christian Assemblies were first *in Privatis Domibus* in Private Houses; afterwards *in Oratoriis & Ecclesiis*, in Oratories and Churches: Plainly distin-

distinguishing Oratories from Private Houses, and shews by Reason of Persecution, they met very often in Vaults, and Burying-places. Our renowned Bishop *Pearson* in's Comment on the Creed, *p.* 337. having said *Acts* 11. 26. and 1 *Cor.* 11. 18. seem to take the Church for the Place, in the following Page saith, its not certain the Apostle uses them in that Sense, nor that there were any Houses set apart for the Worship of God, in the Apostles Times, which then could be called by the Name of Churches.

And that the Primitive Christians thus continued, without Publick Oratories or Churches, is concluded by *Vedelius* in *Ignat. Ultra ducentissimum annum, nullum Oratoriorum Publicorum vestigium apparet:* That there's no footsteps in Antiquity of any Publick Places of Worship for above the first Two Hundred Years after Christ: And upon the same grounds *Spanhemius* in *Hist. Sæculo* 2d°. That *Templa adhuc Christianis nulla, ex silentio veterum & conditione temporum liquet*, &c. That the Christians had no Temples in the Second Century is apparent, from the Ancient Writers making no mention of any, and the Condition of those Times, by Reason of Persecution. So also *Cuperus* in's *Ep. ad P. Voet.* amongst the Notes on *Lactantius de mortibus Persecutorum.*

I shall add no more Testimonies for this, that the Christians had not any Publick Places to assemble in from the Times of the Apostles and ever after, as our Adversaries affirm; having shewn the Opinions of *Clem. Alexandrinus*, *Eusebius* and others, concerning Temples in my first Dissertation. But proceed to the Third Thing proposed, which will further clear this Controversie: In shewing, what Time, and in what kind of Places they assembled, during their Persecution under the *Heathens.*

SECT. 14.

First, How careful the Primitive Christians were, of keeping their Assemblies for the Worship of God, as Private as possible; appears by their holding them frequently in the Night, of which we have unquestionable Witnesses. *Pliny* in's *Ep.* to *Trajan*, writes *Se de sacris eorum nihil aliud comperisse, quam cœtus antelucanos*, &c. That he found nothing con-

concerning their Religious Worship, but that they held their Meetings, in the Night before Day-light, wherein they sung Hymns to Christ as God, &c.

The same is Recorded in *Tertullian*'s Apol. *c.* 2. *Euseb.* Hist. *l.* 3. *c.* 32. And *Hierom* in *Chron. Euseb. Gerb. Vossius* in's Comment on the forementiond Epistle saith, It was necessary for them so to assemble in the Night, because of the continual Persecution they were under, *Persecutio totis fæcalis duravit, ut passim necesse fuerit convenire noctu.*

Tertullian, *l.* 2. *ad Uxorem*, disswading her from Marrying an Infidel, brings this as one Argument, that He would not willingly suffer her to leave him in Bed, to frequent the Nocturnal Assemblies of Christians, if it were needful. *Quis Nocturnis Convocationibus, si ita oportuerit, à latere suo eximi libenter ferat?* And the Learned *Heraldus* in's Notes on *Tertullian, de Corona Militis*, saith, That the Christians often assembled in the Night, *sæpius Noctu Congregatos.* And so do several others: Whence the Learned derive that Ceremony, of Burning Wax Candles before the Shrines of Saints even in the Day Time (as is usual in all the Popish Countries) to retain that Custom of the Primitive Christians, who in Times of Persecution met in the Night, and usually in the Burying Places of the Deceased Christians.

Secondly, Let us consider what kind of Places, the Primitive Christians held their Assemblies in, for Worship: And we shall find them the privatest possible, that they might not be discovered. So that *Celsus* p. 4, and 5. in *Origen*, makes this his very first Objection against the Christians in general, and not of that time only, that they held their Meetings in Private and obscure Places. The which none ever doubted of or denied, that are not strangers in Ecclesiastical History or Antiquity; wherein this is so frequently mentioned.

Alexander Hales Writes of the whole Time in general, related by *G. Biel* on the Canon of the Mass, *Lect.* 13. *Ab Episcopatu* Petri *Apostoli, usque ad Tempus Sylvestri*, &c. That from *Peter* to *Sylvester* Persecution raging, the Episcopal Station of the Bishop of *Rome* was uncertain: But wheresoever the present Necessity constrained them to be, whether in Vaults under-ground, or the Houses of Christians, or what

other places soever; there they celebrated Mass upon an Altar of Wood, made hollow like an Ark; which was carried by the Priests to the Place, wheresoever the Bishop of *Rome* lay hid.

And *Hieron* on 40. *Chap.* of *Ezekiel* describes those Vaults, which they often made their Meeting-places, *Dum essem Romæ Puer*, &c. When I was a Youth at *Rome*, and instructed in liberal Studies, it was my Custom with others of the same Age and Profession, on the Lords Days to visit the Sepulchres of the Apostles and Martyrs, and often to enter into the Vaults, which were digged deep in the Earth; wherein were on each side as we went, the Bodies of dead Men buried. And all Places there were so Dark, that it might well be said of them, according to that of the Prophet, The Living go down into Hell. And rarely Light was let in from above, to qualifie the horror of the Darkness, through a Hole rather than a Window.

And again, going on Foot by Foot, and being compassed about with dark Night, we are minded of that which *Virgil* saith, *Horror ubique animos, simul ipsa silentia terrent.* Horror on every side, and Silence therewithal affrights Mens Minds. A like Description of these Vaults where the Christians met, we have in *Prudentius* his 11th Hymn, in excellent Verses, but too many to be here inserted.

Not that these Burying-places were peculiar to the Martyrs; for other Christians were also Buried there, though not in the same Graves; till under Christian Emperors, Churches were Erected in Cities, into which the Martyrs Bodies were brought from without, and Superstition prevailed to make them the Common Burying-places: Which many Learned Men both Papists and Protestants have written against, and shewn how Injurious 'tis to the Health of the Living, with many other Reasons; but the Tyrant Custom hath always conquer'd the strongest Arguments.

Nor when they met in such Places, was it for their Worshipping the Reliques of the Martyrs, as the *Papists* thence infer: But (besides their Privacy, being remote from their Cities,) for the preserving their Memories fresher in their Minds, and by their Examples be excited to Constancy in the Faith, and Suffering Martyrdom. And though *Omphri-*

us. de Cæmiterii, maintains, that Structures were made for Worship in these Burial-places; and *Hospinian* grants it came to that at length; yet were they but *Sacella*, or Chappels under-ground; as *Platina* tells us in the Life of *Calixtus*, who having said he did not believe that famous and large Church which *Alexander* the Son of *Mammæa* (who began his Reign, *A. D.* 225. according to *Baronius*) had granted the Christians, to be the same, with that which *Calixtus* was said to have built, on the other side of *Tiber*, he gives this Reason, *Cum ea tempestate, ob crebras Persecutiones, occulta essent omnia, & sacella potius, atque eadem abdita, & plerumque subterranea, quàm apertis in Locis & Publicis fierent.* For in those Days, by Reason of frequent Persecutions, all Things were carried secretly: And they had Chappels rather, and those hidden, and for the most part under-ground, than in open and publick Places. Which last Words are also recited by *Pol. Virgil.* If any desire further Satisfaction, concerning the Primitive Christians meeting in those Burial-Places: He may find it in *Kercher's Roma subterranea*, l. 1. c. 2. *de Cœmeteriis.*

But though these Places after some time, and Martyrdom under *Nero* and following Emperors, were used more especially by the Christians, as appears by the Edict of *Decius*, *Nec usquam omnino vel vobis, vel aliis quibusque potestas erit aut celebrandi conventus, aut in ea quæ cœmeteria appellantur ingredi*; Thus the Christians in *Alexandria*, and all others were prohibited their Meetings, or entering into the Cœmiteries particularly. As also by the Edict of *Valerian*, whereby all their Assemblies being strictly prohibited, these Places in special were forbidden them: And as *Gallienus* his Son by his Rescript graciously restored the Places of Worship in general: So by another these Cœmeteries in special, *Euseb. Hist.* l. 7. Yet as Necessity required, by Reason of Persecution, their Meetings in these Places, being found out and known by the *Heathens*, they met elsewhere some times in one Place, and some times in another, as in Woods, Caves, Mountains, *&c.* When they could not in Private Houses, that they might not be discovered. Our Learned *Hooker* in's fifth Book of *Eccles. Pol.* §. 11. hath a short, but very comprehensive Passage for this.

The Church of Christ (saith He) which was in *Jerusalem*, and held that Profession, which had not the publick Allowance, and countenance of Authority, could not so long use the Exercise of Christian Religion, but in Private only. And as God gave Increase to his Church; they sought out both there, and abroad for that Purpose, not the fittest (for so the Times would not suffer them to do) but the safest Places they could. In Process of Time, some whiles by Sufferance, some whiles by special Leave and Favour, they began to erect to themselves Oratories. Thus *Hilary* also in his Book against the *Arrians* and *Auxentius*, speaking of Christians in the Apostles Days, affirms that they were, *Per cœnacula & secreta coeuntes*, such as had their Meetings in Chambers, and secret Places. Afterwards most commonly *in cœmiteriis & cryptis*, in subterraneous Vaults. And in the Time of his Banishment warns them to whom he writes, to beware of Antichrist, for you are unhappily taken with the Love of Walls, you do not well in venerating the Church of God for Structures and Edifices: Is it doubtful that Antichrist shall sit in these? *Montes mihi & sylvæ, & lacus, & carceres & voragines tutiores sunt*, &c. Mountains and Woods, and Lakes, and Prisons, and Gulfs, are more safe to me. For in these, the Prophets either abiding or drowned, have Prophesied by the Spirit of God. And *Walafudus Strabo* to the same Purpose, whose Words we recited in Ninth *Section*, *Page* 40.

So *Polid. Virgil.* a good Antiquary in's Book *de Inventione rerum*, l. 5. c. 6. affirms that, *à Christi ascensu, ad* Diocletianum & Maximianum, *toto fere temporis intervallo tantum aberat, ut aliquod templum à Christianis, publicè ædificaretur; ut etiam omnia essent occulta & sacella potius, atque etiam abdita, & plerumque subterranea quàm apertis in Locis ac Publicis fierent.* That from Christs Ascension to *Diocletian* and *Maximianus*, for that whole Interval of Time almost, the Christians were so far from building any Temple in Publick, that all Things were kept secret: And Chappels rather, and those also hidden, and for the most part under-ground, than in open and publick Places. Though He thinks it credible, where the Fury of persecuting Tyrants reached not, the Apostles might Consecrate some Temples, as *Matthew* in *Æthiopia*,

thiopia, *Bartholomew* in *India*, and *Andrew* in *Scythia*, and *James* at *Jerusalem*. But these are but his Conjectures (for which he brings no Proof) founded upon the Piety of the Apostles, who always employed their utmost Power to propogate Religion amongst all Nations. For we no where find that any of the Apostles required the erecting of Structures for Worship, or Consecrating any for that end: Nor the least Signification, that without such, Religion could not be propogated.

And the Renowned Sir *H. Spelman*, p. 70. *De non temerandis Ecclesiis*, having mentioned the Consecration of Churches in *Constantines* Time, adds, That the Christians being in Elder Ages in Persecution, might hardly Build or Dedicate any Churches; but were constrained to use Private Houses, and Solitary Places for their Assemblies. The Learned Mr. *Robert Cook* Viccar of *Leeds* in's *Censura quor. Script.* shews *Dionysius* Works to be Counterfeit, because he mentions several Things, and particularly stately Temples, after the manner of that at *Jerusalem*, having their *Sancta Sanctorum* divided from the rest, into which it was not lawful for the Monks and Lay People to enter. Whereas there were no such Things in those Days, saith *Cook*, but Christians met together after the Manner of the Apostles, *Acts* 1. 13. and 12. 12. and 20. 8. in private and secret Places, and there had their Prayers and Sermons: Publick Temples they had none by reason of Tyrants.

I might bring in the like Attestations from our famous *Jewel* Article 3. p. 145. *Willet's Synopsis Papismi*, sixth General Controversie, *Quest.* 6. With several others: But I shall conclude all with the Testimony of a great Historian yet living (of whose Acquaintance and Friendship I have the Honour to partake) *viz.* Dr. *Spanhem* the Honorary Professor at *Leyden*, who in's learned and useful Ecclesiastical Hist. of the New Testament saith, *Loca Sacrorum Conventuum fuere sæculo secundo, partim ædes privatorum, cœnacula, balnea, porticus, cryptæ, loca abdita: Partim cœmeteria seu Sepulchreta Martyrum ad quæ Conventus indicerent, zelo accendendo, his constantiæ exemplis.* The Places of the Christians Meetings in the Second Century, were partly Private Houses, Dining Rooms, Baths, Galleries, Vaults, and secret Places: Partly Burial-

Places.

Places, or Sepulchres of the Martyrs, which they appointed their Meetings, for the inflaming their Zeal, by those Examples of Constancy. And afterwards shews, the Manner of notifying their Conventions, was by their Servants from House to House: For as yet neither the beating of Wood, nor sound of Bells, or Brass, or Voice of Cryers were used for this end, lest their Assemblies should be known to the Heathens.

In the Third Century, whether the Christians had any Temples or Churches Dedicated or Consecrated by Sacred and Christian Rites is, saith He, a Controversie amongst the Learned. *Pol. Virgil, Durantus, Baronius, Bellarminus, Ciaconius* and *Valesius* affirm it. And of ours also *Mower, Fuller, Selden* and others.

That Churches are frequently mentioned in this Age, is out of doubt: *At nec Templorum illis aut Nomen, aut Forma, aut Splendor, aut Species quædam. Ædes fuere Privatorum, Domus, cœnacula, sed plerumque cœmeteria, Cryptæ spatiosissimæ, quas areas Martyrum dixere; etiam latibula, stabula, eremi, carceres, agri ex Antiquis Scriptoribus, & ex Conditione Temporum, sæviente ut plurimum Persecutione. Quanquam sub* Al. Severo, & Philippis, & Gallieno, *conveniendi libertas Christianis major. Hinc nulla esse Christianis Templa. Quæ memorantur Templa, Tituli, Consecrationum Ritus Sacerdotales,* a Baronio, Ciaconio, Fr. Bivario, *aliis; ea ex Apocryphis Decretalibus, ex Pontific. vitis, ex* Flavii Dextri *Chronico Supposititio, id genus fontibus lutulentis hausta.* But they had neither the Name, nor Form, nor Splendor, nor Shape or Kind of Temples. They were the Dwellings of Private Persons, Houses, Dining-Rooms, and for the most part Burying-places, very spacious Vaults, which they called the Floors of the Martyrs: Also Lurking-places, Stables, Wildernesses, Prisons, Fields, as from Ancient Writers, and the Condition of those Times is manifest, Persecution then for the most Part raging. Although under *Al. Severus*, the *Philips*, and *Gallienus*, greater Liberty was given for Christian Assemblies. Hence we conclude, the Christians yet had no Temples. Those Temples, Titles, and Sacerdotal Rites of Consecration, mentioned by *Baronius, Ciaconius, Fr. Bivarius*, and others; are all taken from the Apocryphal Decretals, the Lives of the Popes, and the

the Suppositious Chronicle of *Hieron. Dexter*, and such like impure Fountains. Thus far that Learned Professor.

To draw up all in a short Conclusion. We read in *Eusebius* of the Christians building Publick Oratories after *Decius* and *Valerians* Days, not of any built before. These were by Publick Decrees, commanded to be pulled down by *Diocletian* and *Maximus*, and not long after restored by *Constantine*. Those formerly taken from the Christians by *Decius* and *Valerian*, were expressed to be *Cæmeteria* Places of Burial in which they had their *Cryptæ* or Vaults under-ground, formerly represented. So that for separate and publick Places for Worship, for Two Hundred Years and more after Christs Nativity, we have no Records in approved History.

FINIS.

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